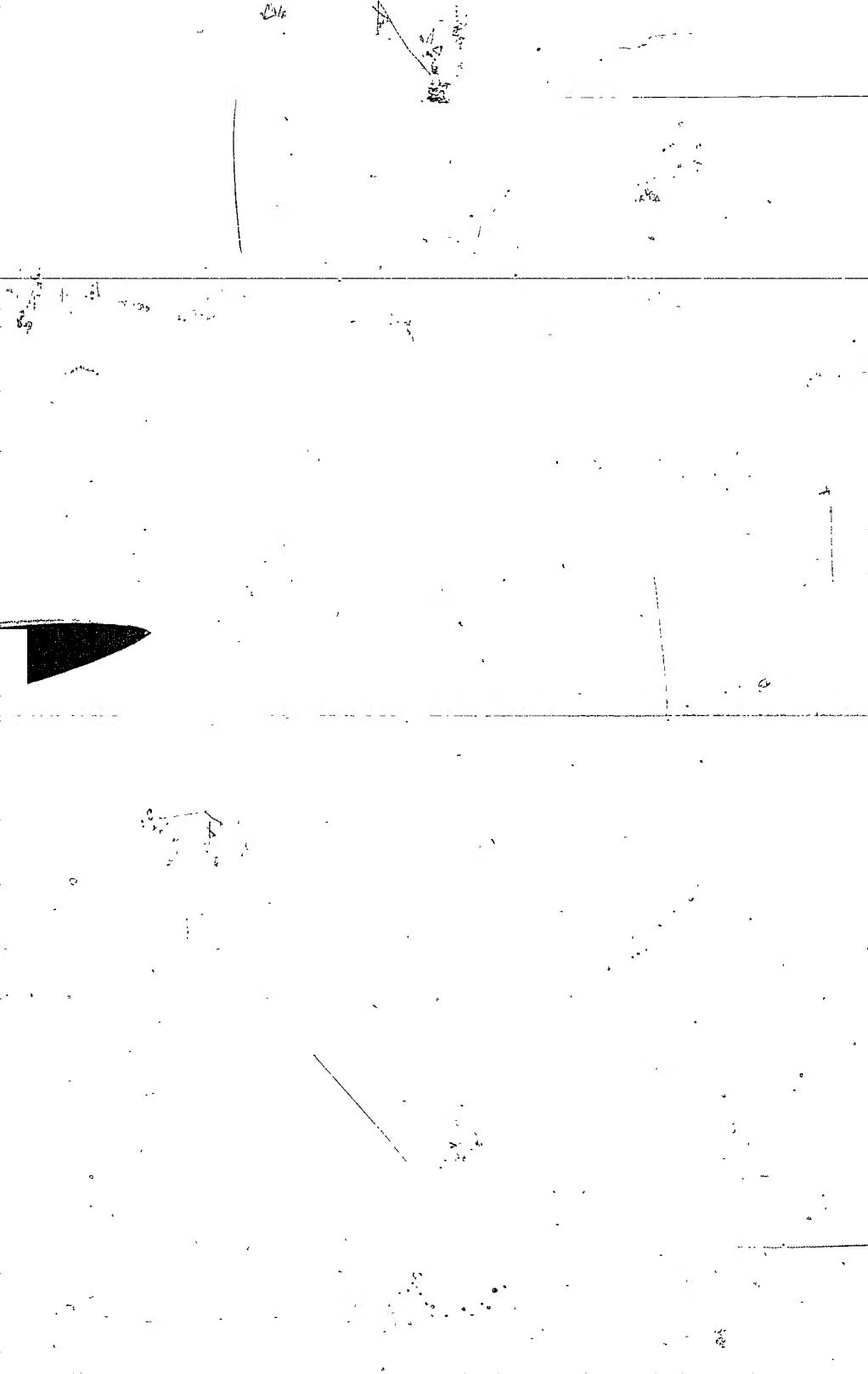


THE
WINTERING PARTNERS
ON
PEACE RIVER

J. N. WALLACE



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THE WINTERING PARTNERS ON PEACE RIVER

From the Earliest Records to The Union in 1821

With a Summary of the
DUNVEGAN JOURNAL, 1806

BY

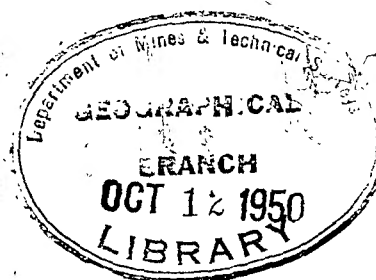
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B.A. (Trin. Coll. Dublin)
Dominion Land Surveyor

Property of
J. H. Gray

The religion of the North was military; they travelled in quest of danger, and willingly took the chance of Empire or Death.

Johnson: The Western Islands (1773)

OTTAWA
THORBURN AND ABBOTT
1929



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By J. N. WALLACE

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FOREWORD.

The following pages are an attempt to outline the personal movements of those who were leaders in exploration and of the fur trade in Peace river region, in the early years. The difficulties of tracing the general careers of such men, and of identifying the sites of the trading posts where much of their lives was spent, have been great owing to the paucity of available material. The writer is well aware of the gaps and of the inadequate evidence on which some of the surmises have had to be based.

The early fur trade derives much the greater part of its importance and interest from the connection of that trade with exploration and with the pioneering of new regions. The fur trade, in itself alone, seems no more worthy of study than many other commercial enterprises which few people would suggest as fit subjects for historical writing. Indeed so far as permanent effect on the country goes, the actual commerce in furs was of small account except that it induced men to go to the west and supplied the necessary funds to explore and occupy new lands. In the whole series of events embraced by the fur trade the feature which seems most worthy of study at this late date is the strong play of human nature which was brought out. On Peace river this aspect was very greatly developed by the newness of the country, by its immense distance from any orderly authority, and, in the last seven years before the Union, by the intense competition between two powerful Companies. The leaders ranged on either side of this competition were not only rivals

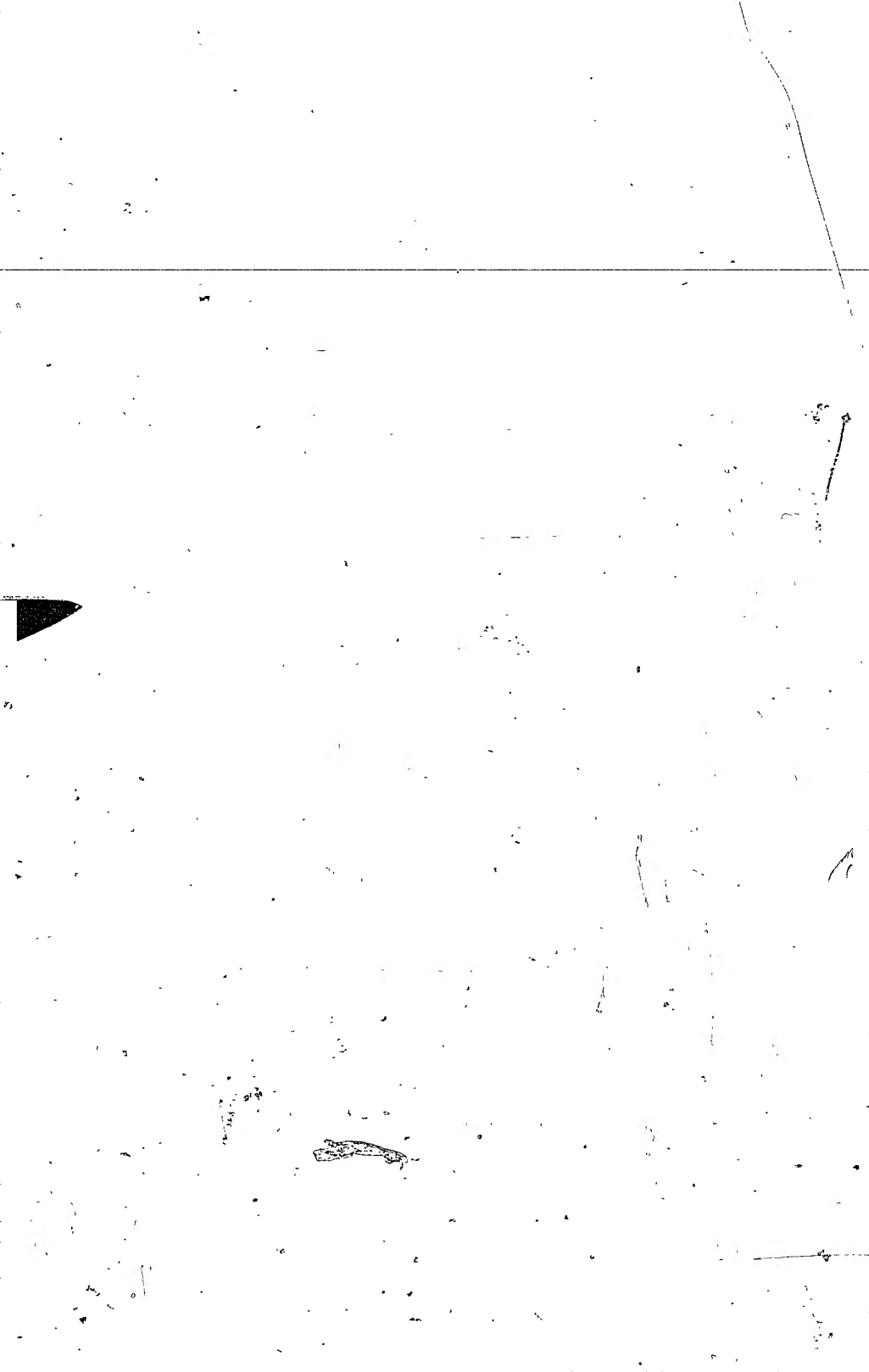
in trade, but were men in whom the ancient antagonism between the English and the Highlanders of Scotland was by no means wholly extinguished.

In the earliest years of Peace river it was by individual initiative among the wintering partners of the North West Company that the great river was explored and occupied from its mouth to its source. In the later contest, when the Hudson's Bay Company entered the river to trade, it found itself opposed by the same individuality. The contest, indeed, was not unlike, in miniature, what occurred when the Highlands were invaded by English troops—a contest of chiefs of clans against the more orderly, if more cumbrous, forces of a greater and more centralised power.

Yet this feature in the history of the fur trade — the personality of those who took part — has received comparatively little attention, and what has been written has largely been concerned with a few particular events in the lives of a few particular individuals. The present writer claims only to have somewhat enlarged the boundaries of this particular field. Looked at from one point of view there is certainly nothing of an inspiring nature in the work of an early trader who was in charge of some log houses enclosed by a palisade, and who lived in a country where little was happening as one day succeeded another. Yet from such outposts the Empire has grown, and the results today of such individual lives have been altogether greater than the mere work which these men seem to have done. The fact is that with very few exceptions, all pioneering is characterised, at the time, by excessive monotony. Much the greater part of even the most important explorations in the West was, at the time, monotonous labour paddling a canoe or carrying loads across one portage after another. The glamour of exploration and of pioneering is all brought about by the passage of subsequent years. Then, at length, we see in one

glance the accumulated effect of what, at the time, seemed mere monotonous work from day to day.

The business of the wintering partners was commercial. That cannot be denied, although the pursuit of that business was redeemed by a degree of courage and self dependence unknown in ordinary commerce. But their lives were not bounded by business alone. Neither were they animated by entirely unselfish motives. But between these two extremes there was an undercurrent throughout their lives, which they fostered, and which led to gaining and holding for the Empire a country which at that time was by no means secure. The contests between rival Companies must not be misunderstood. They were of a domestic nature, and would quickly have been submerged if foreign danger had threatened. There was determination in every advance, no matter under what Company the leader served, that the country which was being occupied should remain within the Empire.



CONTENTS

I. 1776-1786.

Earliest mention of Peace river—Frobisher—Pond—Early maps of Pond and Turner—Mackenzie's History of the Fur Trade. 11

II. 1787-1788.

Wintering partners—Mackenzie at Pond's House—Trade on Peace river—St. Germain—McLeod—Boyer—Mackenzie's letters—Early routes to Peace river—Great Slave lake posts withdrawn—Pond leaves—Mackenzie visits Grand Portage. 16

III. 1788-1792.

Posts in winter 1788-89—Vaudriol succeeds Boyer—Importance of Peace river trade—Fish river post—Exploration to Arctic—Winters 1789-91—Mackenzie in England in 1791—Turnor at Chipewyan—Mackenzie goes up Peace river—Old Establishment—Finlay's New Establishment. 22

IV. 1792-1793.

The Old Fort of Mr. McLeod—Alexander McLeod—Archibald Norman McLeod—Fork fort—Exploration to Pacific 27

V. 1794-1800.

Upper Peace river—Dearth of historical material—Roderick MacKenzie—Finlay's exploration—Trade advances up the river—Rocky Mountain fort—Old journal—Fraser—McDougall—Stuart 34

VI.

The Finlays of the Fur trade—James Finlay, senior, and junior—John Finlay—Second exploration of Finlay river (1824) 39

VII. 1794-1799.

Lower Peace river—John Thomson's post—Grand Marais—Career of Thomson—Chipewyans want a new post—Express from upper river—McLeod, Finlay, and Stuart bring down fur returns, spring 1799—Posts from which they came—Lafleur's post. 42

VIII. 1799-1800.

John Finlay succeeds Alexander McLeod—John Thomson goes to Mackenzie river—Fraser—Stuart—James Mackenzie at Chipewyan—His journal—Wentzel—his journal—Opposition of X. Y. Co.—Lafleur family 50

IX. 1800-1802.

Summer 1800—Porter's post on lake Claire—Archibald Norman McLeod arrives on Peace river—His character—Posts in 1802 56

X. 1804.

David Thompson's survey of Peace river—Fountain island—Horse Shoe House—Fort Vermilion—Fort Liard (modern Vermilion)—Grand Marais—X. Y. posts and wintering partners: 60

XI. 1804-1805.

Union of X. Y. and N. W. Companies—Increased activity—Fraser's early career—He builds Rocky Mountain Portage—McLeod lake—James McDougall—Stuart's journal 66

XII. 1805-1808.

Dunvegan—Origin of name—Early references to site—Journal—Account of building—Alexander Roderick McLeod—A. N. McLeod becomes Montreal agent—Daniel MacKenzie at Chipewyan. 72

XIII. 1808-1812.

Harmon arrives—Journey up Peace river—Fort Vermilion—Encampment Island—Dunvegan—Posts in 1807—John McGillivray—Harmon goes to New Caledonia—Colin Campbell—War of 1812. 79

XIV. 1813-1815.

Hudson's Bay Company's plans—Objections to advancing up Peace river—Selkirk and Colin Robertson organise expedition—John Clarke—Travels to Chipewyan—Want of provisions—Clarke goes up Peace river—Troubles at Vermilion. 88

XV. 1815-1817.

Clarke's expedition unable to advance—Some of the party attempt to return—George McDougall gives up trading goods to N. W. Co.—Men brought up the river by N. W. Co. and sent east to Lesser Slave lake—Clarke's efforts—Returns to Chipewyan—Roderick MacKenzie,

CONTENTS

9

"senior"—Elation of N. W. Co.—A. N. McLeod becomes superintendent.—Attack on Red River colony—McLeod reaches Chipewyan—Hector McNeil—Clarke's second expedition, fall of 1816—McLeod arrests Clarke—Winter 1816-17—Main basis of troubles. 97

XVI. 1818-1819.

Robertson and Clarke—Third expedition, fall of 1818.—Clarke goes up Peace river—Affray at Vermilion—MacIntosh—St. Mary's House—Early posts near Smoky river—Ruins identified—Accounts of MacDonald, of Mair, and of Agnes Cameron—Fort McLeod—Winter 1818-19—N. W. Co. brigade stopped by ice—J. G. McTavish—Contest between Black and Robertson at Chipewyan—Robertson taken east, but escapes at Cumberland—H.B. Co. seize wintering partners at Grand Rapids. 104

XVII. 1819-1821.

Robertson winters at Smoky Forks—Brings out returns to lake Athabaska in spring 1820—Franklin—Robertson takes his furs east, but is seized by N. W. Co. at Grand Rapids—Robert Miles runs rapids with despatches—H. B. Co. makes good progress up Peace river—George Simpson—Winter 1820-21 at Chipewyan—Simon McGillivray arrested—Union of Companies—Simpson's abilities—His long journeys—Visits Peace river in fall 1822—Wintering partners become chief factors and chief traders. 111

References and Notes *	181
Dunvegan Journal	122
Index	137
Map of Peace River	At end
Map of Western Canada	Inside end cover

* As these are, with very rare exceptions, merely references to authorities, they are not placed as footnotes which distract attention. The small figures in the text should be entirely ignored in general reading.

The Wintering Partners on Peace River

I. 1776-1786

Earliest mention of Peace river—Frobisher—Pond—Early maps of Pond and Turner—Mackenzie's History of the Fur trade.

WE do not know who, among the white race, was the first to stand on the banks of Peace river or to travel on its waters. The existence of the river was first made known to Joseph Frobisher and Alexander Henry, senior, by Indians whom they met at the easterly entrance to Ile à la Crosse lake in June 1776. Those two pioneers of that region had come up Churchill river from Amisk lake where they had built an establishment in the previous year. As a result of their journey Thomas Frobisher, brother of Joseph, spent the winter 1777-78 at Ile à la Crosse and traded with the Indians. Next summer several traders had a meeting on Churchill river and commissioned Peter Pond to promote their interests jointly by further advance to the northwest. Pond reached the lower waters of Athabaska river and at a place on its banks, about forty miles before it reaches lake Athabaska, he built a house in this year 1778 much in advance of any previous trading post. This establishment, known as Pond's House, stood near the place where the river divides into two branches a little to the south of the 28th surveyed base line.

Alexander Mackenzie states that Pond's establishment "was the only one in this part of the world till the year 1785". As, of course, Pond's House continued as a trading post for several years after 1785, Mackenzie's statement means that a second post was established in that year. Where was this second post? Mackenzie does not enlighten us, and it may be that the date he specifies really involves an error which later he intended to correct. For, when he recounts his journey to the Arctic Ocean he notes that Messrs Grant and Le Roux had established a post on the south shore of Great Slave lake in 1785, but this date he has later corrected, in his table of errata, to read 1786 and so it appears in all later editions. Should the other reference to 1785 have been included in this correction? In other words is the post which Mackenzie says came next after Pond's House the one which was established on Great Slave lake? If not, and if the date 1785 is to stand, we have no further information about this second post.

There are certain maps which purport to show Pond's travels, but they become more puzzling and seem to lose in importance the more we study them. Pond's character was such that it cannot be left out of consideration when we study a map made by him or on his information. One of these maps, compiled by Ezra Stiles in 1790, marks Pond's House as having been his residence No. 18 (that is during his long wanderings in the west). Next we have No. 19 which is on the southeasterly bank of Peace river and apparently (for the scale of the map is fantastic), about seventy miles northwest of Pond's House. Residence No. 20 is on the north shore of lake Athabaska far to the northeast of modern Fort Chipewyan, and No. 21 is on the south shore of Great Slave lake in the position of the post of Grant and Le Roux. At this location on the map is the legend, "Here capt. Pond resided 3 years, 781, 782, 783, 784 come off". The numbering of the residences must be in order of time. As we know Pond

ON PEACE RIVER

13

was at No. 18 in 1779 and the map states he was at No. 21 in 1781 he would have been at No. 19 on Peace river sometime between those two years. This seems to be the only evidence, if indeed it is evidence, that Pond was ever on Peace river. ¹

Pond's own map of 1785 indicates that he knew very little at that time about the real course of Peace river, for he makes it flow north directly into Great Slave lake. He may have depended on Indian report. In Ezra Stiles' compiled map the course is correctly shown, but before its date Mackenzie had made his northern exploration. Pond may, however, have reached Peace river by travelling westerly from his house on Athabaska river and crossing the southerly part of Lake Claire. In such case he would have encountered the river where its course trends for many miles so much towards the north that it would have been natural enough to suppose its outlet was in Great Slave lake. This suggested point of encounter would have been at the westerly end of the old winter trail which meets Peace river near the mouth of a small tributary until very recently called Vermilion river. It is 67 miles below Vermilion Falls, and in modern township 111, range 21. ²

Turnor's map, which incorporates what he learnt during his visit to lake Athabaska in 1791-92, does not materially assist in the search for the first visit of white men to Peace river. There is on this map a remark entered at Pond's House which seems aggressive against some claim by Pond. The remark reads:—"Is the furthest north he ever wintered" Pond had, of course, left the West before Turnor went to the lake. On this basis Ezra Stiles' remark that Pond resided three years on the south shore of Great Slave lake is carelessly general in its terms. ³

Any facts about the discovery of Peace river which we can glean from Mackenzie are of a very general nature. Like many early writers he has an exasperating way of assuming

his readers know much more than they really know. Yet his remarks are always valuable, and he wrote with both force and moderation. It has been suggested that Mackenzie's history of the fur trade was written by his cousin Roderick, the chief support for such a view being his cousin's known talent for writing. But the explorer was not deficient in literary ability, and his letters show the same force and directness which are so apparent in the history. The part which deals with the detailed description of the various routes was very probably contributed by Roderick, but the historical part is entirely different in style from the style of Roderick's *Reminiscences*. The latter is quite noticeably weak and fearful of giving offence. It was this fear of offending, which characterised Roderick, that led Mackenzie to warn him that he would make more enemies than friends if he ever carried out his idea of writing about the early fur trade. The fact that Roderick never carried out his intention was almost certainly due to his innate dislike of offending anyone.

Alexander Mackenzie, when he is dealing with the early history of the Indian tribes, who dwelt on Peace river, makes an indirect reference to the first arrival of white men, but his remark is capable of two meanings. He observes, "As late as the year 1786, when the first traders from Canada arrived on the banks of this (Peace) river, the natives employed bows and snares."⁴ What should be understood by this remark? Does it mean that the traders first saw Peace river in 1786, or that the first post was then established? There could not, in any case, be much difference between the two events. Trader and explorer in that country and those days were the same. There was no instance of exploration except that done by men who were traders. Yet it would be interesting to learn if Mackenzie meant that white men first saw Peace river in 1786.

There might be another interpretation. He may have used the name Peace river as including the whole course to Great Slave lake. In fact he does so use it on one occasion when he states the Crees drove the Beaver and Slave Indians before them and "the latter proceeded down the river from the lake of the Hills (Athabaska), in consequence of which that part of the river obtained the name of Slave river.. The former proceeded up the river"—and finally made peace at Peace Point. On this interpretation Mackenzie's statement about the arrival of the first traders may refer to their going down Slave river to establish Slave Fort which event occurred in 1786, the year named by him.

Undoubtedly the first presumption of anyone in search of the earliest arrival on Peace river would be in favour of Peter Pond yet, if he really was the first, why is there no definite claim to that effect? There is a considerable amount of myth in the exploration credited to some of the early explorers. Mackenzie's silence about any exploration made by Pond, subsequently to his building his house, is very marked. No doubt there was a strong antagonism between the two men, yet Mackenzie was generally very fair to others, and it is by no means improbable that Pond has been credited with being more of a pioneer than was really the case. In the end we seem to be unable to find any satisfactory answer to our enquiry about the earliest arrival on Peace river.

II. 1787-1788.

Wintering partners—Mackenzie at Pond's House—Trade on Peace river—St. Germain—McLeod—Boyer—Mackenzie's letters—Early routes to Peace river—Great Slave lake posts withdrawn—Pond leaves—Mackenzie visits Grand Portage.

The internal organization of the various companies formed to exploit the fur trade, after the British took possession of Canada, differed from the system then in force in the Hudson's Bay Company. In this older Company those who carried on the actual trade with the Indians were officials of the Company, and were not a part of the corporation itself. But in the case of the other companies the higher officials who were engaged in the Indian trade in the interior, were themselves partners, and there were no shareholders in the usual meaning of the term. There were two sets of partners, those who resided in Montreal, and those who lived in the West. The main duties of the former were to import the merchandise to be used in trade, to ship the furs to England, and to attend to the general accounting which occurs in all commercial organizations. The salient feature, in the case of the other set of partners, was that they lived in the actual field of operations throughout the whole year. For this reason they were referred to as those who wintered in the Indian Country, or more generally, as the wintering partners.

Various Companies came and went, but the North West Company remained predominant among all the newer companies. A general meeting was held each summer at Grand Portage (later at Fort William), on the northwesterly shore of Lake Superior. To this meeting the Montreal agents sent their representatives, and there were also as many of the

wintering partners as were able to come. All matters for the ensuing year were arranged at this meeting by a majority of votes, the absentees voting by proxy.

At the annual meeting the furs which had been brought by the wintering partners to Grand Portage, were turned over to the Montreal representatives, and by them were taken east, while the trading goods, which had been brought west, were delivered to the wintering partners, who then returned to their own districts. Arrangements for furlough enabled each partner to spend a winter in the east on a basis of about once in five years, but exchanges among themselves, and other contingencies, broke up any regular routine.

The wintering partners controlled, on an average, about sixty per cent of the voting power, and the Montreal agents held the remaining forty per cent, although the latter, as may be supposed, really wielded more power than this proportion would indicate. The wintering partners were, however, men of great influence in the policy of the Company, and their mode of life, without any controlling influence except by a distant Company in which they were themselves partners, and in which they held considerable power, obviously developed marked individuality and initiative. It was, indeed, these wintering partners who contributed to the fur trade those outstanding characteristics which have served to distinguish it from a mere commercial enterprise.

* * *

Seven years had passed since Pond had built his house when Mackenzie, in 1785, first reached the western country. His first two winters were spent at Ile à la Crosse in charge of English (Churchill) river district, and at the succeeding annual meeting at Grand Portage in the summer of 1787 he was appointed to take charge of the more distant Athabaska

department on behalf of the newly united Companies. In this charge he was associated with Pond who, notwithstanding his having been implicated in the murder of Ross, was still a partner. We can readily imagine how distasteful such an association must have been to a young man of Mackenzie's character. He reached Pond's House, after a difficult journey, on 25 October 1787, so late in the season that he was caught by ice on Clearwater river and had to leave all his loaded canoes on that river. This unfortunate delay was near proving disastrous to the prospects for next year.

Up to this time, the fall of 1787, we have no word of any trade on Peace river except what we may gather from Mackenzie's obscure remark in reference to 1786. Combining a letter written to his cousin Roderick on 2 December 1787 and a report to the eastern agents dated 1 February 1788 we learn that although one of his assistants, St. Germain by name, had reached Pond's House fifteen days earlier than himself, yet even so it was too late to send goods to either the Slave lake or Peace river countries. This might mean there was already a post on the river, or that it had been intended to establish a new post when the brigade had arrived. We also learn that two other assistants, McLeod and Boyer, set out on foot from Pond's House on 2nd November for Peace river country taking with them twelve men and 900 lbs. of goods. The object was to get meat for the use of the brigade in its voyage out next spring and also, by giving the Indians credits for goods supplied, to induce them to bring furs to Pond's House in March. This party returned some time before 2nd December 1787, "and the Indians came with them to this place."

When studying Mackenzie's letters in the years 1787 to the early months of 1789 it should be remembered that the letter heading "Athabasca" means Pond's House, not Fort Chipewyan on lake Athabaska. Mackenzie spent more time at Pond's House than is generally recognised. It was there

the great idea of exploration first took form, and indeed his mind was quite made up, and arrangements were already made for Roderick to act in his absence, before even the site of Fort Chipewyan had been chosen.

The country to which McLeod and Boyer went on foot is described in the letter referred to as "the Beaver Country" that is, the land of the Beaver Indians, and in the report to the agents it is called "The Peace River Country". No clue is given as to what part of the river they visited, but as they went on foot they must have gone westerly from Pond's House by way of the country at the south of Claire Lake. If they actually reached the river, which is questionable, it must have been near the mouth of the small stream now called Vermilion or Brousseau river about 65 miles below Vermilion Falls. There is a winter trail in that direction from Athabaska river.

So far as the movements of white men are concerned, Peace river was first reached by the route which has now been generally outlined, that is, by going down Athabaska river. It thus came about that the lower valley of Peace river was the first to be known. But the Indians, in addition to this northern route, had, from very early times, also used a much more southerly means of approach. This was by way of Lesser Slave lake, and by a road which is still in use, and which runs from the west end of that lake to Peace river near the confluence of Smoky river. Both routes were used by the Cree Indians on their early war excursions against the Beaver Indians, whom they had found in possession of both upper and lower Peace river. Mackenzie tells us that, previously to the year 1780, those of the Beaver Indians who dwelt in the lower valley, obtained all their European articles by barter with the Chipewyans and Crees, tribes with whom they had made peace, and who brought these articles inland from Hudson bay. But the Crees who

had invaded the upper valley remained hostile to a much later date, "even until the Beavers had procured arms, which was in 1782."

During Mackenzie's first winter at Pond's House, 1787-88, that establishment was, as far as we know, the only one in operation to the north of Ile à la Crosse. When matters were looking serious on Mackenzie's late arrival, Grant had volunteered to take a message by canoe down Slave river to Leroux who at the time was stationed on Great Slave lake, and was depending on the arrival of his winter supplies from Athabaska. But Grant was blocked by ice before he could reach lake Athabaska, and he then had to send two men ahead. They, in the marvellous way Indians have, managed to reach Leroux. The message they brought back must have been serious, for Mackenzie, after consulting with Pond, sent an order to Leroux to bring all his men south to Pond's House.

This order may have been due to a slight attack of nerves on Mackenzie's part, but he was not hopeful, in any event, for the northern country. "It is difficult," he wrote in February 1788, "to say what can be done in time to come in this country (apparently referring to the entire region of Great Slave lake and Peace river) but so far as can be judged from present appearances there will be no possibility of establishing a fort there to advantage," and he thinks it might be better to draw the Indians southward, thus favouring the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company.

We now come to the early summer of 1788. Pond bid farewell to the West where for many years he had been among those in the front line of the advance into unknown regions. Yet Pond's character was so much at variance with the traditions of British exploration that we may well ask if the cause of the western country would not have been better served if he had never gone there, even though the advance

had been held back. It could not have been delayed more than a few years, and Pond's subsequent activities in favour of American claims, as against those of the country in which he had lived, go far to nullify any claim he might have on us on account of his explorations:

Shortly after Pond had gone, Mackenzie set out for Grand Portage, his mind troubled with indecision in regard to his projected northern exploration. Roderick was the only person whom he believed to be capable of defending him against possible intrigues at Grand Portage when he would be absent in the north, and Roderick was determined to leave the service. To such an extent, indeed, did Roderick carry out this intention that he had already reached Lac la Pluie, far to the east of lake Winnipeg, when Mackenzie, on his way back to the west, met him. The result of that historic meeting was that Roderick generously turned back, and together the two cousins travelled to Pond's House where they arrived in the late fall of 1788.

III. 1788-1792.

Posts in winter 1788-89—Vaudriel succeeds Boyer—Importance of Peace river trade—Fish river post — Exploration to Arctic — Winters 1789-91 — Mackenzie in England in 1791 — Turner at Chipewyan — Mackenzie goes up Peace river — Old Establishment — Finlay's New Establishment.

"On our arrival at Mr. Pond's Old Establishment," Roderick Mackenzie relates, "the outfits for the several posts of the department were made up and dispatched." ⁶ We are not told where these posts were, except that Roderick himself was to establish a new one on lake Athabaska, and that Alexander Mackenzie would winter at Pond's House for the second time. The other posts must have included one somewhere on Peace river under Boyer, another down Slave river under Cuthbert Grant, and another on the north side of Great Slave lake. Of five posts in this winter 1788-89 one only was on Peace river.

On 15th February 1789 Mackenzie, then at Pond's House, reported to the agents, "Mr. Boyer writes me from Peace river that he thinks of leaving the country in the spring. I have sent to Isle à la Crosse for Mr. Vaudreil, but I fear that gentleman will not undertake so long a journey on snowshoes. The Crees here have been troublesome, but Mr. McLeod has kept them in check". ⁷ A little later, on 22nd May 1789, after he had finally moved to Fort Chipewyan, he writes, "The greatest dependence of this place at present is on Peace river. Hence I am sending goods next winter (1789-90) to Fish river about 60 leagues above this." ⁸ And so we have to gather what information we can from indirect references. Where was Boyer's Fort? Where was Fish river? When did McLeod or Boyer first come to the Athabasca country? Mac-

kenzie's remarks on this occasion are the first references we have to these matters and, as usual, he assumes that anyone who will read his communication does not need to be further enlightened.

It is remarkable that, on the very eve of his great exploration to the north Mackenzie should place so much importance on Peace river. Why, then, not have explored it, instead of going north? The answer must be that he had become imbued with the idea that the river from Great Slave lake flowed to the West. Exploration on that river would be down stream on the more tranquil lower part of a great river, while Peace river would involve the troubles of head waters and the crossing of a divide. Mackenzie had only one object—to reach the western ocean. We may safely conjecture that, if the course of the river from Great Slave lake had been correctly surmised, Peace river would have been explored to its source three or four years earlier than was actually the case, and the northern river would never have known Mackenzie. By no means the least claim of that great explorer is the way in which, balked and disappointed in his first attempt, he still had the enterprise and courage to persist in a wholly new, and obviously more difficult direction.

Boyer persisted in his intention to leave, and Vaudreuil arrived as his successor. In the letter of 22nd May 1789 Mackenzie wrote: "Mr. Boyer goes out; I could not prevail on him to remain. He is a very fit person for Peace river. Mr. Vaudreuil is to spend the summer there." ⁹ Very little is known about Boyer. He is said to be identical with the trader who, with Bruce, gallantly defended Fort des Trembles on Assiniboine river in 1781. We do not know when he reached Peace river region, nor anything of his subsequent career.

While Alexander Mackenzie was on his adventure down the northern river, Roderick went to Grand Portage, and

there received orders, signed by Simon McTavish and John Gregory, to carry out the intention of building 60 leagues up Peace river, but if the gentlemen from the east knew where Fish river was, they knew more than we know to-day.

The distance can only be regarded as a guess. Modern Jackfish river is quite a large tributary flowing in twenty miles above Peace Point, but it is only fifty leagues from Old Chipewyan, if we take a league as three miles. Mackenzie greatly under-estimates distances, and it is almost certain that the river he had in mind was much more than 60 leagues distant. We have no record that such a post was ever built, and it is quite possible that the general plan was changed. After Mackenzie had come back from the North, and had learnt that the western ocean could not be reached that way, he would realize the new importance of Peace river as his future route. This, combined with the greater confidence in striking into new waters which his northern journey would have brought him, may have inspired him to establish this second post, (for Boyer's post was already active on the river), far above any previous one. As a matter of record we do find in 1791, only two years later, a post far up Peace river, no less indeed than 500 miles above its mouth, and 220 miles above Boyer's establishment.

Mackenzie wintered 1789-90 at Fort Chipewyan, keeping Roderick with him, and he spent the next winter there also, but Roderick was then somewhere on Great Slave lake. In summer 1791 Mackenzie and McLeod went to Grand Portage, while Roderick stayed at Chipewyan. The following winter Mackenzie spent in England and it was the late fall of 1792 before he returned west with the Athabaska brigade. While he had been absent, Philip Turnor arrived at Chipewyan to observe the longitude. He had been sent, for

ON PEACE RIVER

25

this purpose, by the Hudson's Bay Company, at the request of the British government. This matter had become important owing to Pond's very erroneous report which had indicated that lake Athabaska was very near the Pacific coast. Turnor was a competent astronomer, and this may be described as the earliest scientific expedition to the region of Peace river, although Turnor indicates on his map that he did not go up Peace river itself.

Early in October 1792, Mackenzie left Chipewyan on his way up Peace river to his winter-quarters. The first post which he notices is called by him "The Old Establishment", and is described as being five hours by canoe, in October, above the upper end of an island called Grand Isle. So far as considerations of travel go this island might be either modern Sled island in township 108, range 11, or the large island three miles below modern Vermilion. If the former is adopted we will have the Old Establishment in the close vicinity of modern Vermilion, while the latter island would call for a site at least ten miles higher up. The writer is not aware if there may be any local tradition, but ventures the view that the Old Establishment was either identical with modern Vermilion, or within a very few miles higher up the river, and that it could not have been ten miles higher up. Mackenzie's map indicates that it was on the north side of Peace river.

Whatever may have been the exact site of the Old Establishment, there can be no doubt that it was the post of which Boyer had charge in 1788, and which Vaudreuil took over in 1789. Later in his journal Mackenzie records: "In the summer 1788 a small spot was cleared at the Old Establishment which is situated on a bank thirty feet above the level of the (Peace) river and was sown with turnips, carrots and parsnips."¹¹ This indicates that this establishment was identical with the only one, namely Boyer's post, which existed on Peace river in that year. Further, Mackenzie relates that

the river was surveyed by Vaudreuil as far up as this Old Establishment—a very natural terminus for the survey if it was where Vaudreuil was stationed. No doubt the site may seem far up Peace river for such an early venture, but the river was easy to navigate, even though the Falls intervened. We have already seen that no post was occupied on Peace river in winter 1787-88 for no trading goods could be sent from Pond's House, but for all we know there may have been an earlier post built in the fall of 1786. There would necessarily have been one if Mackenzie's remark means that the traders built their first post on Peace river in that year. Such a post might have been an out-post of Pond for the North West Company, or of Ross for Gregory and Company. It was the universal rule to build a new post in the fall of the year after the return of the brigade, although the site was often occupied during the summer and the logs then cut for building in the fall and winter.

The position of the next post referred to by Mackenzie, as he goes up the river, is free from doubt. He calls it the New Establishment, and says that Mr. Finlay, who had left Chipewyan a few days before himself, was going to take charge. Finlay evidently had nothing to do with the building up to that date, and it is suggested further on that he had come west with Mackenzie and that this was his first journey up Peace river. When Mackenzie's distances and directions, crude as they are, are plotted on paper we can see a remarkable bend in the river appear, and when he reaches a sharp angle he records this New Establishment. The same bend appears when we plot the survey of David Thompson who went down the river in 1804, and when he comes to the same angle he records: "N. 15. W. 2-3 mile; near end of (this) course the Old Aspin Fort—Fort du Tremble". This is undoubtedly the site of Finlay's post of twelve years earlier, and is in the westerly half of township 106, range 16.

IV. 1791-1793.

The Old Fort of Mr McLeod — Alexander McLeod — Archibald Norman McLeod — Fork fort — Exploration to Pacific.

We have now to consider a post which has received less notice than it deserves. As Mackenzie journeys up the river his survey notes are, in some cases, so erratic that they can be accounted for only by extreme haste to avoid being caught by ice. If we try to keep in continuous touch with his progress from point to point we will be lost before we reach the end of the journey. We must interpret his notes in groups, basing each group on some item of topography which we can identify by comparing a modern map of Peace river with Mackenzie's crude survey. Thus, when he records "the establishment of last year," we must not go by his total distance up the river, but should work backwards from the known Smoky Forks. He makes this interval 34 miles, but as he always under-estimates, and his survey of the bends indicates a greater distance we can do little but say that this establishment was at least 34 miles below Smoky Forks. When we refer to Thompson's work in 1804 we find that, although his distances are grossly under-estimated, his directions and proportions are very good, so that we can readily recognise bend after bend as he proceeds along the river. There is no doubt that he is passing the mouth of Whitemud river when he records: "N. 80. W. $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to opposite the old Fort of Mr. McLeod," although he does not mention any river at all. The bends tell the tale in a clear way. Thompson's total distance from the mouth of Smoky river is 25 miles, while Whitemud river is really 41 miles distant. This calls for an addition of 64 per cent to Thompson's distances, but such a

correction, strange as it may seem, closely agrees with the average correction called for by his surveys in other parts of Peace river.

If this old fort of Mr. McLeod is identical with "the establishment of last year," then, of course, McLeod would have been the builder of the establishment referred to by Mackenzie. This, in itself, seems highly probable; in fact the only other possible builder would be Finlay. There were very few traders available in those early years. Something would depend on the meaning of Mackenzie's expression "the establishment of last year". Does it mean the fort was built last year, or that up to last year that was the fort where trade was carried on? The former would mean it was built in the fall of 1791 for the trade winter 1791-92. If so, the building would have occurred while Mackenzie was in England and while Turnor was at Fort Chipewyan; the latter would allow for its being built as early as the fall of 1790 or even of 1789. Finlay would be out of the reckoning if we take the earlier dates, for he was not on Peace river before Mackenzie left for England, and the evidence is that he did not come west until with Mackenzie himself in the fall of 1792. Finlay's history is given later on and it will be seen that he had family connection with people of influence in the fur trade, and he would travel in an imposing manner. Mackenzie, in January 1793, entertained an idea of taking Finlay on his Pacific exploration, yet in April 1794 he writes most disparagingly about Finlay. This indicates that he knew little about Finlay before his brief association with him in the fall of 1792.¹²

On the other hand McLeod was with Mackenzie as early as the fall of 1787, and he was "mentioned in dispatches" in the spring of 1789 for his ability to control unruly Indians. He spent the summer of 1789 in charge of Pond's House, and in that fall he built some houses at Chipewyan. There is then

a gap in his history until we learn he went to Grand Portage in 1791, where he was indignant that his uncle Norman McLeod of the former Gregory McLeod and Co., had not arranged that he would succeed him. Where was McLeod during the winters 1789-90 and 1790-91? Both Alexander and Roderick Mackenzie spent the first of these winters at Chipewyan. It is not likely that a man of McLeod's active nature would remain there as third officer, and at least we know nothing which would preclude a suggestion that he spent both of these winters on Peace river, and the last one at this post far in advance of any previous one. McLeod would hardly have expected a partnership at Grand Portage in the summer of 1791, and indeed would not have gone there at all, unless he were bringing out returns from some post of his own. Mackenzie's map shows "McLeod's Fort" about thirty miles below Smoky Forks, and this would be proof that it was the fort to which he refers as the establishment of last year, if we consider the reference on the map could not be to any fort which might possibly have been built between the date of the journey up the river (1792) and the date when the map was actually published (1801). As a matter of fact this map does not seem to show any fort established after the date which occurs in its title, that is 1793, as witness there being no mention of Rocky Mountain Fort which we know was built at least as early as 1798.

Such evidence as we have indicates that McLeod went up Peace river in the fall of 1790 and built a post near the mouth of Whitemud river, and that it was in operation until the spring of 1792 when it was replaced by the new establishment six miles above Smoky Forks.¹³ We might even suggest that the site of Mackenzie's winter quarters, and their general design, were due to McLeod. Even at this early date Mackenzie may have entertained an idea to leave the West as soon as his exploration was over. He held McLeod in high

esteem and he would be a natural successor at this new fort, and so McLeod may have designed it on a substantial scale.

This early post at Whitemud river has received singularly little attention. Its existence, like the career of its builder, has been over-shadowed by the greater events attending Mackenzie's journey to the Pacific Ocean. The site of the post was more than 550 miles from Fort Chipewyan, which itself was a mere point in an unknown country. Courage and tact of no ordinary degree were needed to take charge of so isolated a post. The task of a winterer was not to command a military garrison in a strong fort, but to carry on a trade which was entirely dependent on avoiding conflict with superior numbers who, none the less, had to be kept under control. The Indians could, at almost any time, destroy the whole party, and they had to be controlled by moral force. Those from the Highlands of Scotland who had been leaders in their own country, were well fitted for such a task. Self-dependent, inured to Spartan conditions, accustomed to scattered communities, their character was suited to their new surroundings, and the clan system, whatever may have been its faults, certainly produced men who knew how to rule in their own small circle. It was by no mere chance that so many of the men who were prominent in the early history of the West were of this stock. They may not have had the sense of orderly progress so characteristic of the English nation, and so effective in settling a country already explored, but orderly progress is a slow way to advance into unknown regions.

Alexander McLeod was associated with Mackenzie during the eight years of the latter's career on Athabaska and Peace rivers, and he remained as a wintering partner on Peace river for several years after Mackenzie had left the West. Contemporary references to him, apart from remarks in Mackenzie's letters, are extremely rare. It is quite possi-

ble he entered the fur trade as a winterer before Mackenzie went west. Such would account for the latter's evident feeling that he should do what he could to further McLeod's claims for partnership, a rank which he attained in 1795. He was nephew of Norman McLeod of the firm Gregory and Co., but that is about all we know of his family connection with other McLeods of the fur trade. Although he seems to have been older in years than the more famous Archibald Norman McLeod there cannot have been much difference in standing, as the latter became partner at least as early as 1799. Alexander McLeod, however, retired before the time of the Agreement of 1802, while his kinsman remained as wintering partner until 1808, and was then agent, apparently right up to the Union in 1821. The combination "Messrs. McLeod and Mackenzie" is met with on several occasions in such records as we have, and it may be well to point out that, when it occurs before 1799, the reference is to Alexander McLeod and Roderick Mackenzie, while after 1802 it refers to Archibald Norman McLeod and James Mackenzie. Between the two dates specified the combination does not occur.

It is not easy to understand why the new fort to serve as winterquarters for Alexander Mackenzie was placed on the southeasterly side of Peace river, when a much better site was to be found on the opposite side. The greater amount of timber on the southeasterly side probably decided the matter. We will learn later that in the case of Dunvegan the logs for the fort were hauled across the river on the ice, but horses were available when Dunvegan was built. Questions of defense can hardly have entered into the matter for the wintering partners seem to have paid no attention to topography on such basis. The palisade and bastions were their great reliance, for hostile Indians could approach a fort with almost equal ease amid any kind of topography, and the traders were in the country for trade, not to place difficulties in the way of approach. Their real defense from

day to day in the face of overwhelming numbers was their own courage and the traditions of the class from which they sprang. If their methods at times were rough we must remember that the rougher surroundings of life a hundred and more years ago produced a rougher character than that required in the more easy circumstances of modern life. And in the far North West in those days it is not at all certain that gentler means would have afforded safety from the Indians, or have enabled them to keep control over their own men. Governor Simpson expressed himself forcibly about the Indians. "I have made it my duty," he said, "to examine the nature and character of the Indians, and however repugnant it may be to our feelings, I am convinced they must be ruled with a rod of iron." ¹⁴ Mackenzie refers to the respect of the men "to their employers who are comparatively but few in number and beyond the aid of any legal power to enforce due obedience." That respect was very largely based on the conspicuous personal courage shown by the wintering partners whenever a dangerous situation arose.

Mackenzie's great journey to the Pacific ocean began on 8th May 1793. He went from Fork Fort up Peace river towards its southerly source but, unfortunately missing the turn which he should have taken up the tributary called Crooked river, he continued up Parsnip river. He thus missed the comparatively easy Giscome Portage across the great divide, and crossed by a more difficult route forty miles to the east. He arrived at the ocean on 22nd July, and was safely back at Fork Fort on 24th August. The journey has been recounted many times, and rightly so, for Mackenzie was a prince among explorers, but the following facts in regard to the part of the Peace river journey between the Forks and modern Hudson Hope have not generally been noted. Distances recorded by Mackenzie are grossly under-

estimated, so much so that fifty to sixty per cent must be added to his estimates. As examples we may cite the following distances from Fork Fort, as estimated by him, and as they actually are:—Burnt river, Mackenzie 19 miles, actually 31 miles; Dunvegan site, 31 miles, 51 miles; Montagneuse river, 50 miles, 85 miles; Pouce Coupe, 78 miles, 129 miles; Sinew river, 104 miles, 163 miles; Foot of Rapids, 149 miles, 222 miles. The following will assist in identifying this part of the journey:— 11th May, Quiscatinaw river is Burnt (Saddle) river. 12th May, He camped a little below Montagneuse river. 14th May, Bear river is a name used even in modern times for Pouce Coupe river. The latitude recorded as 56. 1. 19" is a misprint for 56. 11. 9." 17th May. The "small river" must be Halfway river, also known as Grand river in early years.

V. 1794-1800.

Upper Peace river — Dearth of historical material — Roderick MacKenzie — Finlay's exploration — Trade advances up the river — Rocky Mountain fort — Old journal — Fraser — McDougall — Stuart.

All through the history of Peace river—and indeed the remark applies to the whole western country—there occur periods in which we have many records, and then periods in which little or nothing is available, and the four or five years succeeding Mackenzie's journey belong to one of the latter periods. In March 1794 Mackenzie writes from Chipewyan that the trade of Peace river will probably amount to "170 packs, exclusive of what Finlay may trade from the Crees and Montagners." ¹⁵ Finlay may be presumed then to have been at the New Establishment. This amount represented half the total fur trade passing outward through Fort Chipewyan, the remaining half coming about equally from Great Slave lake and Chipewyan itself. To carry all out sixteen canoes were considered necessary. Mackenzie spent the winter 1793-94 at Fort Chipewyan, while Alexander McLeod was apparently in charge at Smoky Forks. As to Roderick Mackenzie, we only know he was not at Chipewyan in the spring of 1794. He tells very little about himself, and his station in the early years is often uncertain. There is no record, and no hint in his own writing, that he was ever on Peace river. He was never an aggressive leader, and on more than one occasion Alexander Mackenzie addresses a letter jointly to "Messrs McLeod and Mackenzie" as though there were difficulty in giving precedence to either. In 1793 he wrote that he believed Grant would soon retire,

and that his place should be given to McLeod and Fraser. This indicates that Alexander McLeod was senior to Roderick Mackenzie. The summer of 1794 was Alexander Mackenzie's last season in Peace river country. Henceforth he was to act as Montreal agent, and come west each year only as far as Grand Portage.

We have now to consider the next advance up Peace river. When Mackenzie was on his western journey in 1793 he observed that the mouth of Sinew (modern South Pine) river would be an excellent site for a fort. While it seems likely such a recommendation would soon be followed by an establishment, we have no record of any fort in that region for several years. In 1797 we know an exploration of the headwaters was made by Finlay, and there must have been some connection between this event and the establishment of the earliest fort above the one near Smoky Forks. Either the fort would have been built as a stepping stone for the exploration, or it would have resulted from facts found on the exploration. The first actual record we have is contained in a journal, "The Rocky Mountain Fort Journal, Fall 1799," which includes a period from 5th October, 1799 to 20th April, 1800.¹⁶ It is, however, apparent from this journal that this was not the first winter the Post was active, so that it would have been built in the fall of 1798, if not earlier.

The position of Rocky Mountain Fort has been generally misunderstood, its site being confused with that of the much later fort built by Simon Fraser at modern Hudson Hope. This is somewhat strange as there is much evidence available to show the fort was far down the river from the site of Fraser's fort. The name of the writer of the old journal is not disclosed. He records that they took from 5th to 13th October to travel from the Forks, and it would be slow travel as they had accidents. Mackenzie was one of the most rapid travellers ever on Peace river, and in the

same time he had only reached nine miles above modern Fort St. John, and did not reach the foot of the rapids, where Fraser later built, until the evening of his tenth day. The distance has been covered in less time, but only by travelling on the ice in winter.

We have also David Thompson's notes of his survey when he went up Peace river to the Rocky Mountain House in March 1804. His distances, like those recorded by Mackenzie, are grossly under-estimated. On this particular journey we find, by plotting each of his courses and comparing the bends and other landmarks with a modern map, that we must add no less than sixty per cent to each of his distances. This is the way with all his surveys on Peace river. He must have known of such errors, but no doubt relied on his periodical observations to supply the correction when he made his maps. It is remarkable that, although Thompson was estimating distances as he walked on the ice and Mackenzie was estimating from a canoe, yet the correction to be applied in either case is practically the same. There must have been some kind of a very long mile, really more than a mile and a half, which the traders used to record the many journeys of their employees, and both Mackenzie and Thompson trained themselves to such a measure. Thompson's proportions are, however, so good, and his directions so carefully taken that we can readily identify bend after bend in the river as he proceeds. The writer has plotted every mile of Mackenzie's and of Thompson's survey notes throughout Peace river, in the former case between modern Fort Vermilion and Hudson Hope, and in the latter case between the confluence with Slave river and Rocky Mountain House. As regards the site of the last named, Thompson had started from the Forks Fort and there is no doubt as to where he ended when he recorded his last course:— "N. 82. W. two miles to the House; thank God." This course ends six miles above modern Fort St. John, and

thus places Rocky Mountain House forty five miles below Hudson Hope. His latitude confirms this site exactly, for he records $56^{\circ} 12' 12''$ while Hudson Hope is $56^{\circ} 1' 50''$, a difference which is equivalent to twelve miles in a north and south direction.

There is also evidence in the old journal itself, if there should be doubt that the site of the establishment might have been materially changed between 1799 and 1804. On 4th March 1800, three men left the old fort "to go on the other side of the Portage." At that date they must travel on the ice, the journal stating that the river did not open until 16th April, and they returned on 9th March, which allows six days travel, and all they did was to go to the far (west) side of the portage, and the portage is only twelve miles long. When they got there they found the river open above the rapids, and could go no farther as they had no canoe. The time taken shows they had to go a long way from the old fort before they reached the east end of the portage.

There is very little of an historical nature in this old journal. There is no mention of any other Post except on two occasions when men are sent "with the letters." On the first trip, (16th Dec.) they are to go to "Mr. F. Fort," and on the second (28th Feb.) "to the Lower Fort." Each trip took 19 days, so that the two forts were identical. Of course the men were not travelling all the time, some days being spent at the other fort, but it would be impossible for two forts to exist under such circumstances. The fort was the one near Smoky Forks, which in this particular winter was in charge of Finlay, as Alexander McLeod had left the Peace river region in the spring of 1799.

While we have no record of the name of the writer of the old journal, we may hazard some possible names. In the North West Company's "Arrangements for 1799" there are listed ten names for Athabasca district which then included

both Peace and Athabaska rivers. These are names of one partner — Finlay — and nine clerks. Six of the ten persons are accounted for elsewhere in the district during this winter 1799-1800, and the remaining four are Simon Fraser, John Stuart, James MacDougal and John Steinbruck. The latter was a German, and there is no hint of this in the style of English, and he spent his service to the north of lake Athabaska, so far as we know. Of the remaining three persons certain items in favour of each might be quoted in turn. As there was only one trader at the Post, for there is no reference whatever in the journal to anyone except voyageurs, and as Fraser was senior to the others, it seems likely the Post would have been assigned to him rather than to one of his juniors, for there was no other Post available. The journal in the Archives is the original. The handwriting is that of a careful but poorly educated man, and the same remark might be made regarding the substance of the entries. The numerous abbreviations show the experienced trader, but he becomes easily confused in his dates. The Journal is endorsed, presumably by Masson, "sans aucune importance," but it derives importance from being the only record we have of the earliest trading Post in what is now British Columbia, although we have an earlier original journal of events lower down Peace river. The writer of the Rocky Mountain Fort journal curiously refers to the Sikanni Chief as the "Cigne chief."

Reference has been made to Finlay's exploration in 1797. Nothing seems to have come from it unless, as suggested, it gave rise to the building of Rocky Mountain Fort. Quite possibly Finlay was chosen to explore rather because no one else was available in those early years than for any special qualification he may have had. It is strange that a man of McLeod's abilities and experience should have done nothing in the way of exploration.

VI.

The Finlays of the Fur trade — James Finlay senior, and junior
— John Finlay — Jaco Finlay — Second exploration of Finlay
river (1824).

There has been much confusion as to the identity of the Finlays of the western fur trade. The earliest record of the name is that of James Finlay who is mentioned by Alexander Mackenzie as having had a post at Nipawin in 1767. The next of the name appears as a young clerk named James Finlay who accompanied Roderick Mackenzie when the latter first went west in 1785. He was son of the Finlay just mentioned and was a brother in law of Gregory, the senior partner of the early firm, Gregory, McLeod and Company. This young man arrived at Grand Portage in September 1785, and then we hear nothing of him until 1792 when we find he is a partner at Fort de l'Isle which was on North Saskatchewan river and about forty five miles above modern Battleford. John MacDonald of Garth, in his autobiography, expressed an indifferent opinion of Finlay's conduct at Fort de l'Isle in the following year. This James Finlay continued on North Saskatchewan river for some years, being transferred to the lower part of the river, known as the department of Lower Fort des Prairies, in 1794. He was still stationed there, as late as 1796 according to Alexander Mackenzie.¹⁷ He must have retired before 1799, as his name does not appear among the wintering partners in that year.

We have now to deal with a different Mr. Finlay, the man who took charge of the New Establishment on Peace river in 1792. The first name of this Mr. Finlay has been uniformly omitted in all ascertained references to his activi-

ties on Peace river. This is an exasperating procedure, but very common in connection with some of the early traders. When, however, we refer to other records, it seems certain that his name was not James, but John Finlay. The earliest of such other records occurs in the arrangements for 1799, published in Masson, vol. I. There we find John Finlay, proprietor in the Athabasca department, which district included Peace river region. We then have the Minutes of the North West Company where, from 1801 to 1806 (the earliest to the latest available) we find frequent references to John Finlay, wintering partner. With one exception only, no other Finlay is ever mentioned in these Minutes. This John Finlay it is expressly stated in the Minutes, retired in 1805, his place being taken by Kenneth MacKenzie. The present writer's view is that it was this John Finlay who explored Finlay river in 1797, although hitherto the name of that explorer has always been given as James Finlay. It is obvious from Mackenzie's references that John Finlay of Peace river, like James Finlay of North Saskatchewan river, was closely related to some early partner of the North West Company. Mackenzie writes in 1793 from Forks Fort that there is no doubt that "Finlay (of Peace river) has more expectations than his services deserve." And again, 5th April 1794, when on the eve of leaving the North West, he writes to Roderick:—"As for Finlay I cannot but think it would be better to let him go out, for he is incorrigible. It is certainly the intention of his friends to push him on to preferment without consideration of his merits. But as you are to direct the barque, order things as you please." 18

The career in the fur trade of John Finlay of Peace river ran about seven years later than that of James Finlay of North Saskatchewan river. So far as years go, they may have been brothers or cousins. The first five years or so of John's service would have overlapped the last years of that of James. Each was in the service for about thirteen

years. but, as already noted, we have only one document which contains both names. This is due to our having very few documents which deal with North West Company officers during the six year period, 1792-97, when both Finlays were in the service. The document referred to, is an agreement among the partners and is dated 5th July 1805. It deals with the shares which became available for general distribution. Both Finlays had by then retired. James is listed among those surrendering two shares, and John among the younger partners who were surrendering one share.

The fact that the explorer of Finlay river in 1797 was named John Finlay, not James as commonly supposed, goes far to explain how the second exploration of the same river in 1824 was credited for thirty years or more to a supposed John Finlay, while really the explorer was Samuel Black. ¹⁹ Bancroft is among those who state that the explorer of 1797 was James Finlay, and on two occasions he refers to "Finlay's Journal MS." Further he says that Mr. Finlay died at Spokane in May 1828. These statements are all in error. The quotation ascribed to Finlay is really from Fraser's journal, ²⁰ and it was Jacob Finlay, an Indian half brother of James Finlay of Saskatchewan river, who died at Spokane. No journal of Finlay's exploration now exists.

VII. 1794-1799.

Lower Peace river — John Thomson's post — Grand Marais — areer of Thomson — Chipewyans want a new post — Express from upper river — McLeod, Finlay, and Stuart bring down fur returns, spring 1799 — Posts from which they came — Lafleur's post.

There is the same difficulty — want of records — in the case of lower Peace river between 1794 and 1798 as occurs in the upper part. No doubt many records exist and will sometime become available, but in the meantime the history should be outlined as well as present records will allow. Roderick Mackenzie and Alexander McLeod seem to have taken over a kind of joint control of the region, the former wintering at Chipewyan and the latter at Smoky Forks. Roderick went to Montreal in 1797 and returned to spend winter 1798-99 at Chipewyan and this seems to have been his last season as a winterer in Peace river country. Among the newcomers up to about 1799 were John Thomson, James MacKenzie (brother of Roderick), Simon Fraser, John Stuart and James MacDougal.

Towards the end of 1798 a new Post was built in the lower part of Peace river and we have an account of the building, which was on a modest scale, in the unpublished journal of John Thomson. It is entitled "A Journal kept at Grand Marais ou Rivière Rouge, 1798," and it covers the period from 4 October 1798 to 30 April 1799. The title is taken from the year in which the journal begins. This is always the case of journals which include only one winter's operations, and misunderstanding may occur if due regard is not given to this fact. For example, a person reading James MacKenzie's Journal, as published in Masson, may see such a

date in the text as 25 April, and on looking at the page heading he sees "Journal 1799," while really it is 25 April 1800. Also, like the majority of such one-winter journals, the first entry in Thomson's journal is made on the day he reaches his station, and the journal ends abruptly when the returns are packed and the party starts on its way to the head post.²¹

Thomson's first entry, made on 4th October 1798, is that he left Fort Chipewyan on 25th September to pass the winter "at this place," and arrived on the date of entry. Brousseau, one of those valuable non-commissioned officers of the fur trade, had spent the summer at the site and had logs ready cut for building. Thomson's instruction had been given to him by Roderick Mackenzie, then in charge at Fort Chipewyan, and they called for any kind of a house good enough to live in during winter.

There is not the least indication that the writer of this journal considered it necessary to explain where the post was situated. He obviously assumes that whoever should read his entries would know this. No one who has not studied these old journals would believe how difficult it is to ascertain from a journal itself the situation of the post at which it was written. One would think, for example, it would be impossible for a journal of a post on the banks of a river to be made up day by day for many months without the writer making some casual remark from which we might learn on which side of the river his post stood. Yet it seldom occurs that we can tell from a journal anything whatever about location, beyond the most hazy generalities. This journal is no exception to the rule. At best we can do no more than balance uncertain items of evidence in the light of our general knowledge of local history. The title used in this case is very unusual, alternative names being given to the establishment. The river which is now called Mikkwa

river and which flows into Peace river five miles below the Falls, is still known locally by its former name Red river and also Little Red river, and there is another smaller river, 62 miles lower down, to which a similar name, Vermilion river, was applied until very recently. If we were to be guided only by the name Riviere Rouge we would fairly conclude the post was near the mouth of one of these rivers. But there is the alternative name Grand Marais, and this complicates matters. When David Thompson was going down Peace river in 1804 he records the site of "The House of the Grand Marais, now deserted," and there is no doubt whatever about his location. By plotting each of his courses in detail the site is plainly seen to be at the extreme northern part of the smaller and more westerly of two horse-shoe bends about fifty miles above Peace Point. This site is in the northeast corner of township 113, range 20, and is about 24 miles below the small river (Vermilion river) and 87 miles below the Falls.

We are, of course, faced with the question whether David Thompson's abandoned House of the Grand Marais is the same as the house built by John Thomson six years earlier. David Thompson was a great geographer, but he tells very little about the history of the many abandoned posts which appear in his field notes. It seems very improbable that a post should have been built at the mouth of Red (Mikkwa) river in 1798, have been abandoned and a new post with the same name have been built more than eighty miles lower down, and it too have been abandoned, and all occur within the short period of six years. Some one, presumably Masson, has written on this journal, "Thomson was then a young clerk. This riviere Rouge is the Little Red river on Peace river; see Geological Report 1875-6, page 162." This location seems to be a mere guess. The Little Red river in the Geological Report is the one now called Mikkwa which is only five miles below the Falls, yet

we have seen David Thompson places Grand Marais House 87 miles below the Falls. The evidence seems to indicate that John Thomson's post of 1798 was at the site recorded as Grand Marais by David Thompson, and that the post at Little Red (Mikkwa) river was built by John Stuart in 1800.

The endorsed remark that Thomson was then a young clerk is misleading as he had then been at least ten years in the service, although this is his first recorded appearance on Peace river. The spelling of his name indicates that he was of Scottish origin, while David Thompson was from Wales. There was nothing in common between the two men, and they had entirely different characters and different careers. John Thomson spent the winter 1789-90 in charge of a post on lac d'Outarde in the district of lower Churchill river. This lake has not been identified, but is described as being ten days journey by a good canoe route, albeit with twenty three portages, to the northeast or northwest of Namew lake, or English lake as it was then called. Next winter 1790-91, Thomson was in the same place and was unfortunate in his returns, according to William McGillivray who refers to him as our little friend Thomson.²² Whether this reference to his physique is to be taken literally or by contrary does not appear. In 1791 Mackenzie states that he has re-engaged Thomson on the same terms as were offered to McLeod which we know to have been generous. Thomson must, therefore, have had a good reputation as a trader seven years before he built his Post at Grand Marais. We have no information as to where he was during the intervening seven years.

Whatever may have been the site of John Thomson's new post of 1798, it was unsatisfactory to the Indians, who declared they would not frequent it in the following summer, but would go to lake Athabaska and propose to MacKenzie and McLeod that a fort should be built at the Bark river.



The English Chief was the leader of these malcontents and gave as reason that the Chipewyans did not like the Beaver Indians who came to the Post, indeed were so much afraid of them that they surrendered them everything. Some kind of promise was made that a Post would be built "at the source of the Bark river. They say it is there they kill skins." This river is another feature which is not certainly identified, but seems to be the modern Birch river which rises about eighty miles southwest of Lake Claire, takes a wide sweep to the west, and falls into the westerly side of that lake.

An express arrived at Thomson's Post on 3rd November 1798 from "the upper fort." There was bad news from that quarter; a war party had killed and wounded several of the Beaver Indians. John Finlay must have been in charge of the next post above Thomson, as the latter says that the men with the express had not expected to find anyone where he was, and they had therefore left Mr. Finlay's place well provided with provisions, a remark which would be odd if the men had passed another post before they reached Thomson. When spring had arrived Thomson fears that "the gentlemen from the upper regions will arrive before the packs are made up." This fear, however, soon changed to anxiety about those gentlemen themselves, for on April 25th it is recorded that the Indians are quite uneasy at the Peace river gentlemen not arriving. The Indians' anxiety was quite as much on their own account as they had to wait at the post with little to eat. On 29th April the tension was relieved. "Late in the afternoon Messrs McLeod, Finlay and Stuart arrived in two light canoes. 30th April; In the morning the batteaux arrived, and in the afternoon all the loaded canoes passed this place. Mr. McLeod remained here all day on account of the Montagners, as it was very late before they gave a satisfactory answer to Mr. McLeod's questions.

Prepared everything to set off tomorrow. Made up a pack which is the 29th." Here the journal, like all one-winter journals, ends abruptly.

From what posts higher up the river did the Peace river gentlement bring down these returns of winter 1798-99? The returns were all from Peace river, for at that date there was no post beyond its headwaters. Those who would have a definite and precise answer to this question are not likely to be satisfied, for while these years may not be early in the general history of the North West, they were early in that of Peace river, and records are few. We may surmise that Alexander McLeod came from a post at Smoky Forks, but whether the post was still at the original site of Mackenzie's fort of 1792 or had been moved to the opposite (northwesterly) side of Peace river we do not know. In James Mackenzie's journal at Fort Chipewyan, 16th April 1800, we read a description of the post which he calls Mr. McLeod's fort at the Forks. "There," he writes, "everything is arranged even to superfluity. The mens' houses are better arranged than the bourgeois' house here. The fort is built with five bastions, court-yards, a spacious garden, a well, a powder house." ²³ As Alexander McLeod left Peace river in May 1799, immediately after John Thomson records his coming down the river, the palatial establishment with the five bastions must have been built at least before that date. Was this post identical with Mackenzie's fort? It seems at least possible that McLeod's fort was a later establishment built on the northwesterly side of Peace river and nearer to the mouth of Smoky river. For one reason it is not easy to imagine a "spacious garden" laid out under a hill which cuts off the sun, and in a situation which Mackenzie noted was most inconvenient for viewing the sky to obtain his longitude, while all the time an admirable site existed on the opposite side of the river.

Finlay during the same winter, 1798-99, must have been much lower down the river, either still at the New Establishment or at its successor which was (Upper) Fort Vermilion, far up the river from its modern namesake. It might be gathered from a few scattered references that Finlay was unlike the general run of wintering partners, who were men of a powerful physique and aggressive character. He was of a highly strung temperament and "of a weak constitution." It is more than probable that, ever since Alexander Mackenzie had left the country in 1794, Alexander McLeod had been the dominant leader on Peace river. On his leaving in 1799 Finlay would succeed to the command of the upper river, and would move his quarters to the larger establishment at Smoky Forks, and we find him there in the ensuing winter, with the post re-named Mr. Finlay's Fort. Such names seem, as a rule, to record merely the person in charge at the time. After a fort had been abandoned however, it often retained the name of its original builder.

We do not know who succeeded Finlay at the New Establishment or Fort Vermilion, as the case may have been, but very shortly after we hear of Lafleur's fort which seems to have been identical with the post soon to be called (Upper) Fort Vermilion, and Lafleur would then, although only of the rank of a non commissioned officer, have succeeded to the charge of that part of Peace river. As to Stuart, he was then a junior and had very likely spent the winter, 1798-99, as assistant to McLeod or Finlay, and was brought down to attend to minor work in the lower reaches during the summer, in the same way as we know was the case in the following summer. Simon Fraser, perhaps the most difficult man of all to trace in these years, was next in rank to McLeod and Finlay, and it would be natural that he should be left inland up the river to have general charge until the brigades should return in the fall. The opinion has already been ventured (for

it is but a venture) that Fraser was in charge of Rocky Mountain Fort, six miles above the site of modern Fort St. John, in the winter 1799-1800. If that should be correct it might be extended back to the previous winter, as the same person appears to have been there in both winters.

VIII. 1799-1800

John Finlay succeeds Alexander McLeod — John Thomson goes to Mackenzie river — Fraser — Stuart — James Mackenzie at Chipewyan — His journal — Wentzel — His journal — Opposition of X Y Co. — Lafleur family.

The only winterer on Peace river in 1799-1800 who had actually attained the rank of partner, was John Finlay. At the meeting at Grand Portage in 1799 it had been arranged that Alexander McLeod should have his rotation of furlough in 1800, but it looks as though he never returned to the West after the meeting, and we know he was not a party to the re-organization in the summer of 1802. Thomson was down Mackenzie river, not yet a partner. Fraser, as supposed, was at Rocky Mountain Fort, and as for Stuart all we know is that he came down Peace river in the following spring (1800) and must have spent the winter on the upper parts.

We have a considerable, but disconnected account of matters at Fort Chipewyan, during this winter, in James MacKenzie's journal, extracts from which are published in Masson, vol. II. In the part of this journal dealing with the early months of 1800, MacKenzie writes that it was the fifth year he had spent in that country, which would mean he had arrived in the fall of 1795. In this early part of 1800 Fort Chipewyan had already been moved from its original site on the south side of lake Athabaska to its modern location much farther west and on the north shore. Possibly this move was one of the last operations of Roderick who had left for a more eastern field in the summer of 1799. "The Old fort" on the south side is mentioned by James MacKenzie as still occupied as a fishing station where 200 whitefish were caught daily.²⁴

On New Year's day of 1800 we meet with the first record of W. F. Wentzel, who in later years was to become a voluminous letter writer. Masson says he joined the North West Company in 1799. Early in January 1800 James MacKenzie writes that he is sending Wentzel to The Forks, that is to the post a little above Smoky river, but the extracts of the journal do not record his going there. Wentzel is not, however, again mentioned until the end of May (1800) by which date both Finlay and Stuart had arrived at Chipewyan from the upper Peace river, so that Wentzel would have come down with them. It will be observed that in this spring of 1800 Finlay and Stuart came down, as they had come down in the spring of 1799, but that Fraser did not come down in either spring. This, however, cannot be interpreted as meaning that Fraser was not left somewhere on the upper river. We know he was left behind in spring of 1800 for he came down in August. If he did not also remain on the upper river in 1799 we do not know where he was in that summer.

John Finlay, after some stormy scenes at Chipewyan with the new opposition composed of X. Y. traders, went east on 24th May 1800 to the annual meeting at Grand Portage, and next day James MacKenzie records: "About 12 o'clock last night Mr. Stuart and Mr. Wentzel went off with three men and a few pieces for Peace river. The former is to build a fort for the Beaver Indians between Grand Marais and Lafleur's fort, and the latter is to work with Brousseau at Grand Marais." 25

We have now to study an original journal which is a veritable enigma even among the many puzzles of the early journals. The manuscript is among the Masson Papers. vol. IV, and is endorsed, presumably by Masson, "I do not know who is the author of this journal. The writing is like that of John Stuart, but it cannot be his as he is mentioned in the journal itself. The year must be 1798." While

the mere fact that a person's name occurs in a journal does not preclude his authorship, as sometimes the third person is used, Stuart is mentioned in this journal in such a way that he certainly is not the author. Study of this journal leads to the conclusion that the writer is Wentzel, and that the year is 1800. The handwriting is certainly not like Wentzel's writing of later years, but being at this date very young, probably about eighteen years, his hand would not be formed, and this is a formless writing:

This journal runs from 13th June to 20th August. The week days in the earlier part do not agree with year 1800, but the order is later changed and agrees with that year. There is no mention of the name of the Post, but it must have been Grand Marais when the Journal begins. On 23rd June Mr. Stuart arrives at the Post, and Wentzel (assuming he was the writer) records. "We ran out a plan that Mr. Stuart is to go and keep the Montagners in the riviere aux Vieuxards, and I to remain here." On 30th June Wentzel leaves for fort Chipewyan and arrived there on 5th July, about an hour, he says, before Mr. Thomson came in with 74 packs in three canoes. The late date shows that Thomson must have come from Mackenzie river, as that brigade could not cross Great Slave lake until the ice went out. Wentzel states that he left Chipewyan on his return to his Post on 7th July, and that he was accompanied by Thomson who was going to Montagne des Roches, that is Rocky Mountain Fort which, as we have seen, was six miles above modern Fort St. John. In James MacKenzie's journal we find under date of 8th July. "This morning Messrs Thomson and Wentzel set out in a light canoe for Grand Marais. Mr. Thomson goes to the Rocky Mountain, giving all the advice and assistance he can to the gentlemen acting for this Company as he goes along. Mr. Wentzel will remain where he was before, and will have Mr. McLeod to help him and Brouseault." ²⁶ What perversity induced James MacKenzie to

use the expression "where he was before" instead of telling us the name of the place? It is true that there is a day's difference in the dates of the two journals, but neither writer was noted for his exact dates. On 15th July Wentzel records, "Arrived at this place which is the riviere aux Vieuxards. Here I remain to keep the Crees and a few Montagners, as Mr. Stuart has the R. R. Potties well in hand." ²⁷ This, taken with what has been previously recorded, seems to indicate that Stuart had gone up Peace river from Grand Marais and established some kind of a Post at the riviere aux Vieuxards, and that then he came back down the river, and sent Wentzel up to the new Post.

The identity of riviere aux Vieuxards has not been satisfactorily determined, despite much investigation. The name might be bad French for Oldmen's river, but seems more likely to be a corruption of Vieux-liards — the river with the old cottonwood trees. We can gather here and there throughout the journal that the post, which was more like a trade rendez-vous than an establishment, was some distance above the Falls, that it was a short day's journey below Daoust's place which latter was a little distance above "Mr. Finlay's old fort," and that it was seven or eight days journey by a light canoe in July from Fort Chipewyan. These items might suggest that the riviere aux Vieuxards was modern Boyer river five miles below Fort Vermilion. Possibly against this suggestion is the fact that the journal states a trip was made in July from the post down to modern Mikkwa river, and back again, between noon of one day and "dark" of the next day, and also that in one day a trip was made from Daoust's place to the Falls, which would seem to be a distance of 90 miles down stream. Such trips are not impossibilities but are certainly long distances in the times stated.

We can glean a certain amount of information about summer 1800 from this journal when it has been subjected to laborious study, and to comparison with other sources which may afford some clues to its many obscure references. Great antagonism is displayed against the X Y Company, then newly arrived on Peace river. Much of this is the merest pretence, nothing more than the writer's boasting of his zeal and of his terribleness against any rival of his own Company. Entries in traders journals can never be regarded as more than statements of witnesses which have not been subjected to cross examination. The journal records trade carried on at three places on the river below modern Fort Vermilion — by the writer of the journal at riviere aux Vieuxards, by John Stuart somewhere above Thomson's Grand Marais, possibly at the mouth of modern Mikkwa river, and by Brousseau at Grand Marais or at its site, as the place is called the old fort. It will be recalled that Brousseau had been Thomson's assistant at Grand Marais. There are references also to establishments higher up Peace river, the nearer being called Lafleur's fort and the farther one the Upper fort. This last was the establishment at Smoky Forks which was Finlay's station, although during this summer he was absent at Grand Portage. Wentzel, if he is the writer, mentions that he camped one night, when he was above riviere aux Vieuxards, at "Mr. Finlay's old fort." This indicates that the Post which Alexander Mackenzie called the New Establishment had been abandoned before 1800.

This journal contains the first definite statement we have in regard to Fraser being on Peace river, for Wentzel says that Fraser was with Thomson when he returned down the river and was passing the Falls on 10th August 1800. We are given no hint where Fraser came from except that it was from somewhere high up the river. So far as we

know, he was the only one up the river with a standing even as high as clerk, unless James MacDougall was also there. When, therefore, Fraser was brought down by Thomson it must have been merely to get more trading goods at Chipewyan, with the intention of returning at once to oppose the X. Y. Company.

Lafleur's Fort may very well have been the one which is later described as (Upper) Fort Vermilion, which was close to the angle in Peace river some seventeen miles below Keg river. Lafleur belonged to a family which appears on Peace river for several generations. The name is not so common in the early fur trade as might be supposed. In 1806 we have J. B. Lafleur, no doubt the same man who is mentioned in the journal, listed as an interpreter on Peace river, and also his son similarly named and also an interpreter. In that year the father goes from Fort Vermilion to Dunvegan on a visit to his son. This son can be no other than Harmon's interpreter and the same man who interpreted Governor Simpson's address in 1828 to assembled Indians at Dunvegan, as related by Archibald MacDonald.²⁸ Five years earlier, in 1823, this son had been at Fort St. John when the murders were committed. He lived to the great age of 90 years and died at Fort Chipewyan in 1875. He was known as Baptiste LaFleur (A) to distinguish him from yet another generation. His son Baptiste LaFleur (B) was interpreter at Fort St. John when it was re-established in 1874. To gain a clearer idea of the three generations we might consider the trader of Wentzel's time to have been born in 1755, his son of Harmon's time in 1784, and his son again in 1832.²⁹

IX. 1800-1802.

Summer 1800 — Porter's post on lake Claire — Archibald Norman McLeod arrives on Peace river — His character — Posts in 1802.

To continue the events of 1800, there is an interesting reference in a journal of that year to a post which stood in a situation where few people are aware a post ever existed. The record occurs in James Porter's journal which runs from February 1800 to February 1801.³⁰ Porter, when his journal begins, was at his post on a small lake-like expansion of Slave river, some eighteen miles above Great Slave lake. On May 17 he sets off for Fort Chipewyan, arrives ten days later, and leaves there on 2nd June. We cannot check these dates from James Mackenzie's published journal as Masson has omitted the part of that journal from 25 May to 6th June. Here it may be remarked that Masson's main object seems to have been to publish such parts of journals as dealt with the mode of living, both of the traders and the Indians. He seems to place but little importance on entries about movements of individuals, or about the dates of matters which he considered to be routine. The result is very irritating at times. We not only lose records which would be valuable, but later in the journal or letter we cannot understand certain parts which he does publish, as they depend on what has been omitted. Masson, however, is by no means the only editor who has misjudged the relative importance of what may be called the personal and the descriptive parts of journals. Descriptions can often be supplied from later sources, while records of personal movements, once lost, can seldom be recovered.

Porter travelled westerly from Fort Chipewyan and after passing Mamawee lake he camps on the first day near the end of what he calls Hay river. Next day he goes on slowly, and on the third day gets over "the portage" with difficulty and reaches Claire lake, only to be soon forced to shore by the wind. Here in a miserable camp with cold and snow—although it was the first week in June—he was storm bound for five days. Then he starts again and on the same day gets safely to "the old Fort" where he found many Chipewyans waiting for him. He had taken only one man, Cadien by name, from Fort Chipewyan. A few days after Porter's arrival the Indians report that there is no water in the entrance to Bark river, so that they cannot use their canoes. As Porter reached the site of his post on the same day as he made a traverse across Claire lake it must have been on the west shore. No other reference to this post has been found. It had evidently been occupied in the previous year. It will be recalled that Thomson at Grand Marais, in 1798, said the Chipewyans were anxious to have a post on Bark river, and thus events, both before and after, indicate that it was built in 1799. Porter relates the same incident as James Mackenzie (2 August 1800) in reference to one of the Indian hunters being killed by a buffalo not far from the post on Lake Claire.

On 7th August 1800 Porter completed his season at his un-named post, and returned to Fort Chipewyan. There he remained until 29th September, when he went down Slave river to his post of last winter. He was accompanied by Thomson, who had returned from his unusual and hurried trip up Peace river, and also by Wentzel who had reached Chipewyan from his mysterious riviere aux Vieuxards. When Porter reached his old quarters on Slave river he remained there, while Thomson and Wentzel went on to the North. Porter's journal gives one the impression that he was an experienced trader. He had come to this region from the lower

Saskatchewan river, where he was at one time in the service of the Grants' Company. He did not long survive, and this old document holds at once his own record of some of his work, and his epitaph by the hand of another. Some one has written on its cover, "Mr. Porter was drowned in summer 1805."

A notable arrival on Peace river in 1802 was that of Archibald Norman McLeod. He had been in charge of Fort Dauphin district and that of Swan river from at least 1797. He states in his own journal at Alexandria on 30th November 1800 that he had then been there three years. He was due for furlough in 1802, but at the Meeting at Fort William in that year he was asked to winter, and was sent to Peace river country. This unexpected move was, no doubt, due to the combined facts that the X. Y. Company had become very aggressive there, and that the Hudson's Bay Company had opened trade on lake Athabaska by sending Fidler this year. McLeod must have wintered either at Fort Chipewyan or at Smoky Forks. David Thompson records his presence at the latter place in the spring of 1803. He was aggressive, autocratic, and ruthless in his way, and an uncompromising opponent to the Hudson's Bay Company so far as trade was concerned. Yet there was another side to his character, and Harmon, who knew him well, describes him as "a sensible man and an agreeable companion, and a taste for reading I owe in a considerable degree, to the influence of his example". And when some years later Harmon met him again, he writes, "With this gentleman, to whom I am under many obligations, I am happy to spend an evening, after so long a separation." The great blot on the character of A. N. McLeod is the part he took against the Selkirk Settlers. It is not easy to account for such action by men of his class except on the theory that the surroundings of the Highlands, from which he came, were so rigorous that they fostered, to a very late

date in history, certain characteristics which were necessary in the early struggles of mankind, and which, properly controlled, have had much to do with the success of such men in opening up new countries.

We have, in a Return of the North West Company for 1802, a statement that there were eighteen posts in Athabasca department in that year. The department included Peace river, lake Athabasca, Great Slave lake, and Mackenzie river, but not the upper waters of Athabasca river, that is, Lesser Slave lake and river, etc. As this list was intended as a support to get a charter, it no doubt included every possible outpost, yet even so, it is difficult to identify so many posts. We might surmise three on Mackenzie river, three on Slave lake and river, two on lake Athabasca, and Porter's post on lake Claire. This would leave nine for Peace river itself, and we might tentatively name seven main posts, Grand Marais, Red River (Mikkwa), Liard (modern Vermilion), Upper Vermilion, Horse Shoe House, The Forks, and Rocky Mountain Fort. The same Return states there were five wintering partners in the department, presumably Archibald Norman McLeod, John Finlay, Simon Fraser, John Thomson and James MacKenzie.³¹

David Thompson's survey of Peace river — Fountain island — Horse Shoe House — Fort Vermilion — Fort Liard (modern Vermilion) — Grand Marais — X Y posts and wintering partners.

Reference has already been made to David Thompson's journey on Peace river in 1804. He left Smoky Forks on 29th February of the leap year 1804, went up to Rocky Mountain House, and returned to the Forks which he reached on 13th March. From there he set out on the 15th to survey the river all the way down to its mouth, and then to Fort Chipewyan. On this particular journey he travelled at first on foot on the ice, and then by canoe. While on foot the correction required to make his distances agree with the actual distances is almost the same as on his similar journey up to Rocky Mountain House, that is, an addition of about 60 per cent. As soon as he takes to a canoe, the correction drops at once to about 40 per cent, but rises farther down the river to as much as 70 per cent.

When Thompson was fourteen miles from the Forks according to his reckoning which, increased as indicated, really amounts to about twenty three miles, he notes Fountain Island. It is in modern section 25, township 85, range 21, and it apparently has derived its name from some oil springs. Further down, when Thompson is plainly opposite to the mouth of Whitemud river, as can be seen when the bends in the river are plotted from his field notes, he records "The Old Fort of Mr. McLeod." The history of this old establishment has already been discussed. On 20th March, at his record fifty two miles below the mouth of Smoky river.

ON PEACE RIVER

61

Thompson arrives at "The House of the Horse Shoe." The site of this post can be obtained by comparing Thompson's notes with the actual course of the river as shown on a modern map, and it is seen to be just below the place where the river has turned well around to the northeast after flowing almost due west down the first part of a remarkable horse-shoe bend. The post stood in the extreme southeast corner of modern township 94, range 21, and about eighteen miles above the mouth of Notekiwini (Battle) river. Thompson obtained a good latitude observation at the Post, $57^{\circ} 08' 00''$, and this latitude confirms the site just described. The actual distance down the river from Smoky Forks is 90 miles, so that a correction of 73 per cent must be applied to Thompson's distance.

There is no reference in Thompson's field notes to enlighten us as to who was in charge of Horse Shoe House, nor do we know when it was established. There is no mention of such a post by Harmon, when he went up Peace river in 1808 and there is reason for thinking it was abandoned before 1806. Thus far Thompson had walked on the ice. He now waited at Horse Shoe House for the opening of navigation, and on 20th April he proceeded down the river by canoe. An addition averaging 40 per cent must now be added to his distances. No particular comment, except in regard to the location of Wolverine point, is called for until he reaches an establishment which he calls Fort Vermilion. Wolverine point according to Thompson is not, as might be supposed from its name, the modern Carcajou point, but it is the sharp little projection which occurs much higher up, on the north side of the river, in the middle of the long turn towards the west through township 99, range 19. On 2nd May he reached Fort Vermilion, having taken thirteen days in the canoe from Horse Shoe House. The position of Fort Vermilion can readily be identified from Thompson's note, but it is surprisingly far up Peace river from the present esta-

ishment of that name, no less than 67 miles intervening. It is important to state that when Thompson's survey notes are plotted on paper, course by course, a much more accurate map of the river is obtained than is shown on his map. The result is that we can locate a post much more closely by plotting his field notes than by examining his map. This is also the case with Mackenzie's map. Crude, and erratic at times, as are Mackenzie's survey notes, they show the bends of the river much better than the map, which latter is not even in approximate agreement with Mackenzie's notes and places. It is also important to note that early maps of all classes were seldom revised to the date of their title. Thompson's great map, for example, shows the posts on Peace river, not at the date of the title (1813) but as "he knew" them in 1804 — a very serious source of misunderstanding.

Fort Vermilion of Thompson's time (1804) was just north of the crossing of the twenty seventh surveyed base line, and on the right side of the river, being as nearly as can be estimated, in section 4, township 105, range 18. This is seventeen miles below Keg river. At the fort Thompson found Mr. Clarke and men all well. At this site Fort Vermilion stood for many years, from its earliest establishment about 1800 until some time after 1828. Here this same Mr. Clarke in 1815, when he had changed his allegiance to the Hudson's Bay Company, received a serious set-back at the hands of William MacIntosh and other wintering partners of the North West Company, and here in 1818 a somewhat serious affray occurred between his party and the men in the fort, although as usual in such affrays there appears to have been but little permanent injury to anyone engaged.

Thompson resumed his journey down the river and when, according to his notes, he had travelled seventeen miles which, with the correction of 40 per cent added, amounts really to

twenty three miles, he records "Old Aspin fort—fort du Tremble. This abandoned site has already been identified as that of Finlay's new Establishment founded in 1792. It was at the extreme end of a sharp angle in the river running to the northeast; and was on the southerly side of what is almost a peninsula formed by the river, midway between the old and modern positions of Fort Vermilion. On the evening of the second day from Fort Vermilion Thompson reached the post which he calls Fort Liard. Here again by plotting his courses we can identify the situation, and we find it to be close to modern Fort Vermilion, so close in fact that we have ^{no} reason for thinking the two sites are not the same. In the field notes there is no reference to anyone being at this establishment, but other information tells us that he found "Mr. Fraser" there.

Only half a day was spent at Fort Liard, and the journey is then continued down the river. He passes the Falls, but in his field notes he records nothing about any present or past establishment until he comes far below, when he enters in his notes, "the house of the Grand Marais, now deserted." To give an idea of his great under-estimate of distances, he makes it 285 miles, in all, from Smoky Forks to Peace Point, while the real distance is 475 miles, requiring an addition of 63 per cent. And this discrepancy is not due to omission of certain parts of the river, but to continuous underestimate of each course.

In addition to Thompson's field notes there are other records made by him on this journey, but the writer has not had the opportunity of examining them. ³⁴ From such other notes it is learned that Thompson found Wentzel at a post at the mouth of Red (Mikkwa) river, five miles below the Falls, and took Wentzel with him. As already mentioned John Stuart had some kind of a trading place above Grand Marais in 1800, and it may have been a fore-runner of this post.

Thompson does not record the position of any X. Y. Post on this journey, although there must have been several. The wintering partners of the X. Y. Company who were on Peace river, at one time or another, during the existence of that Company (1798-1804), were Pierre de Rocheblave, James Leith, and later Alexander Mackenzie. The last named whether due to an ironical comparison with his great namesake or on account of his haughty disposition, was commonly called the Emperor. Wentzel refers to him in 1804 as the All Superior and Great Bonaparte Mr. Mackenzie. He seems to have continued with the North West Company until 1802 and only then to have joined the X. Y. Co. Petitot believes he was the builder, in 1799, of a post on the west side of Great Bear lake, which is referred to by Franklin, when Fort Franklin was built at the same site in 1825.³⁵ In his affidavit before Selkirk at Fort William in August 1816 he stated he had been many years in the service, but had retired in 1815. His share was then purchased by Kenneth Mackenzie, and as the "Emperor" was a witness to the will of that partner, while Roderick Mackenzie of Terrebonne was executor, we may glean they were all family connections. In 1816 this namesake of the explorer made a special visit to Red River Settlement; on which occasion it is recorded that he left Lachine in a canoe paddled by fourteen Iroquois.³⁶ James Leith went east after the expiry of the X. Y. Company, but later is found in charge of Dunvegan in 1820. Under the arrangements made by Nicholas Garry at the Union in 1821, Leith was put in charge of the whole Athabasca district, but he was soon transferred to Lachine. Rocheblave seems to have been on Peace river for only a short time about 1803.

It has already been stated that the Hudson's Bay Co. had a representatives in Philip Turnor at Fort Chipewyan in winter 1791-92. Turnor indicates, on his map, two posts on Peace river, each marked "suppose Canadian House," both at considerable distances up the river, and far apart from each

other. Obviously Turnor located these on his maps merely by report received from the North West Company. These two posts are almost certainly the Old Establishment at which Boyer had been, and McLéod's fort near Whitemud river.

As Turnor stayed with Roderick Mackenzie at Fort Chipewyan during the winter it may be assumed that no trade was done on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company, so that the first record we have of that Company in business on lake Athabasca is when Fidler went there in 1802, fourteen years after the North West Company had established themselves there. Fidler built a post, on English island about four miles to the west of Fort Chipewyan as it then stood on the north side of the lake, and named his post Nottingham house. In the ensuing winter an outpost called Mansfield house was built some distance up Peace river, and in 1803 another called Chiswick house was established down Slave river.³⁷ All of these posts were abandoned when Fidler left the country after three or four years residence, and it was many years before the Hudson's Bay Company returned to the district.

XI. 1804-1805.

Union of X. Y. and N. W. Companies — Increased activity — Fraser's early career. — He builds Rocky Mountain Portage — McLeod lake — James McDougall — Stuart's journal.

In November 1804 the X. Y. Company united with the North West Company. Naturally much energy and capital previously spent combatting each other now became available for more concrete purposes. A marked increase in activity resulted next year. This activity may be largely ascribed to this union, yet Davidson is probably correct when he says that part of it was but the late fruit of Simon McTavish's reorganization in 1802, for the agreement of that year recites that they have in view to extend their posts towards the Rocky Mountains and beyond them. Considerable changes took place on Peace river in 1805. An aggressive move was made up the river and over the great divide, and New Caledonia came into being. The move up the last reaches of Peace river to the head of its southerly source was entrusted to Simon Fraser, but the way at the start had already been blazed by James MacDougall.

It has commonly been stated that Simon Fraser joined the North West Company in 1792 at the age of sixteen years. Either this double statement—for it usually occurs in the double form—is not correct, or else there were two individuals named Simon Fraser, both of considerable standing in the early fur trade, a contingency which, if true, has received very little notice. As far back as 1789 we learn from Angus Shaw's letter to Roderick Mackenzie that Simon Fraser and Lesieur were in partnership, and were renting two posts on Winnipeg river, and we also learn, from the same letter, that

Alexander Fraser was stationed in that year on Churchill river. ³⁸ Alexander Mackenzie writes in 1791 that Lesieur and Fraser have continued their agreement for five years. From an unpublished journal of William McGillivray we find that, in the winter 1792-93, Simon Fraser had charge of a post on Reindeer lake. McGillivray, then at Ile à la Crosse, records in his journal, 24th February, "Mr. Alexander Fraser and Beaudril (Vaudrieul?) arrived ~~at~~^{from} lac la Ronge. Mr Simon Fraser's letter is dated the 3rd January. He had then seen but few of his Indians so could form no judgment of the returns. There are, however, a great number of Chipewyans, though not so many as was supposed, and if they work anyways well the three canoes will be pretty heavy. Lac des Cariboux is not better than usual in the fishing way but they make shift to live. Mr. Fraser has not yet heard from the Rat river." ³⁹

Five days later, when Alexander Fraser was leaving Ile à la Crosse, McGillivray records, "March 1. (1793). I wrote to Mr. S. Fraser to send a canoe, if possible, in the spring early to the detroit of the English lake (Namew lake) to build some hut there, to receive the provisions from F. des Prairies, where Mr. Shaw is to send them, and bring out his remaining goods to Fort du Traite, as some of them will be wanted for lac la Rouge." This Fort des Prairies was Fort George, North Saskatchewan river, about 25 miles above the mouth of Vermilion river. The provisions (pemican) would be sent down Saskatchewan river to Namew lake.

Who was this Mr. Simon Fraser? If he was the future explorer surely a person entrusted with such orders would, in this winter 1792-93, have been more than sixteen or seventeen years old. And who was the Simon Fraser who was in partnership with Lesieur in 1789? Continuing McGillivray's account, we learn from his journal that he left Ile à la Crosse on his way to Grand Portage, and on 4th June arrived at

La Ronge river. Next day he records: "Simon Fraser arrived from Fort du Traite with the goods remaining at lac des Cariboux. He has left Mr. A. Fraser to take care of the packs at that place." They then set off for the Pas, McGillivray expressly stating "Mr Simon Fraser travelling in my own canoe," and arrived there on 14th June and found Shaw waiting for them.

The post on Reindeer lake (lac des Cariboux) which had been occupied in this winter, 1792-93, must be the "old houses of the Messrs Alexander and Simon Fraser" referred to by David Thompson as having been abandoned before he was on the lake in June 1797.⁴⁰ As that post was closed by McGillivray's orders in this spring of 1793 Simon Fraser cannot have continued there, but he or Alexander, or more probably both of them, remained in Churchill river district in the following winter, for on 5th March 1794 Alexander Mackenzie, then at Fort Chipewyan, writes to Roderick who was presumably somewhere on Slave river, that they would have to arrange for "two canoe loads (of returns) at La Loche river (north of Ile à la Crosse) that I do not think Fraser will send for."⁴¹

There is an important reference to "Simon Fraser" in an agreement dated 5th July 1805 which occurs among the Minutes of the North West Company. This agreement, which is a kind of subsidiary to the agreement of union with the X. Y. Company in 1804, enumerates the names of those partners whose two shares would be relinquished in 1806. These names are Roderick Mackenzie, Alexander McLeod, William Thorburn, Simon Fraser, James Finlay and Cuthbert Grant. The names are notably those of senior men. If there were two partners named Simon Fraser, which of all the above references apply to the future explorer? If there was only one of the name, how could the explorer have been only sixteen in 1792, and only thirteen in 1789?

A remarkable phase of the whole matter is the invariable gloss over the early years of service of Simon Fraser the explorer, when anyone has tried to recount his career. There is always the gap of many years between the reputed entry into the service of the North West Company, in 1792, at the age of sixteen years, and his coming to fame in 1805. Alexander Fraser became a wintering partner between 1793 and 1799. The explorer Simon Fraser was not partner until 1801. He remained in active service for some fifteen years later, while the latest ascertained reference to Alexander Fraser as a wintering partner occurs in 1806. The name of the latter seems to be perpetuated in Fort Alexander at the mouth of Winnipeg river.

As already indicated Simon Fraser—the explorer, if there were two of the name—had spent five and possibly seven years on Peace river when, in 1805, he was instructed to advance to its headwaters. There have been some rather fanciful comments about the ability Fraser must have shown in previous years in order to have been selected for this work. The fact was that some one had to be chosen from among those of the wintering partners who were in touch with conditions on Peace river, and who else was there to be chosen? John Finlay retired in this year; it does not appear that James MacKenzie was ever up Peace river, and Archibald Norman McLeod was in a position to refuse to go if he did not want to go. Fraser was the natural choice, and was well known from his service on the river to both McLeod and Finlay, the two partners who would have had the most influence in the selection. Fraser had ability and courage, but to assume he so far outshone his fellow wintering partners as some would have us believe, is to forget that practically all of them had ability and courage much above the average of men.

Simon Fraser, having been instructed to carry the fur trade to the west of the mountains, his first act was to establish a new post at the easterly end of the great portage which is used to pass the rapids of Peace river at modern Hudson Hope. This was in the late fall of 1805, and the new Post received the name Rocky Mountain Portage. The traders of that period never referred to it as Rocky Mountain Fort, or as Rocky Mountain House, which names, as already explained, were applied to a much older establishment which was 45 miles down the river from the rapids and was a forerunner of Fort St. John. Fraser then went up to the southerly headwaters of Peace river, there called Parsnip river, and established a Post on McLeod lake. This lake, although it is on the west side of the Rocky Mountains properly so called, yet it drains ultimately to the east of that range. The new Post, later to be named Fort McLeod, after Archibald Norman McLeod who was then about at the summit of his power on Peace river, was the third, not the first establishment to be built in what is now British Columbia. As yet there was no Post to the west of the continental divide, a reminder that a very large part of that province lies in the watershed of Peace and Mackenzie rivers.

Up to this time Fraser was following the steps of the real pioneer of McLeod lake, James MacDougall, who had been in Peace river country since at least 1799, but about whose activities before 1805 practically nothing is known. He seems to have been one of those unfortunate men, common enough in the early fur trade, against whose advancement some barrier was interposed. Fraser left a multi-coloured character named La Malice in charge of Fort McLeod, and himself returned to Rocky Mountain Portage. We have thus reached a time when a Post had been established almost at the very head of Peace river and, if we are to be guided by Alexander Mackenzie, it was then only nineteen years since

the traders from the east had first reached the banks of the river near its mouth, 1,000 miles lower down.

A journal of Rocky Mountain Portage kept by John Stuart and covering the period from 20 December 1805 to 28th February 1806 is available. The most important of its items may be found paraphrased in Bancroft's History of the North West Coast.⁴² There was the usual trouble which seems to have developed wherever La Malice was stationed, in this case nearly ending in loss of life. Two men were sent during winter from Rocky Mountain Portage to McLeod lake, a distance of about 260 miles, and a couple of weeks later Fraser himself, thinking all was well ahead of him, also left for that post. The next event was the appearance of La Malice at Rocky Mountain Portage. He had deserted his post and come by a roundabout way so that neither the first two men nor Fraser following after them, met Malice. This was succeeded by the two men returning a few days after La Malice had arrived. They were exhausted by starvation, as they found no one at McLeod lake. They had met Fraser when he was two days out from Rocky Mountain Portage but he, like themselves, being ignorant of the whereabouts of Malice, pressed on, and the journal ends with Stuart getting ready to send some one after Fraser with provisions to relieve Fraser's own danger. It is from this journal that we get our earliest reference to Fort Dunvegan. The first entry 20th December 1805, states "Mr. Fraser left this, accompanied by Mr. McDougall to go down to Dunvegan as business required him there." The journal does not mention any post between Rocky Mountain Portage and Dunvegan, and it seems that Rocky Mountain Fort was closed. A demand for a post in its vicinity was, however, soon to occur.

XII. 1805-1808.

Dunvegan — Origin of name — Early references to site — Journal — Account of building — Alexander Roderick McLeod — A. N. McLeod becomes Montreal agent — Daniel MacKenzie at Chipewyan.

Dunvegan is the best known fort in the history of Peace river, and its fame is a notable example of the romance which can be conferred by a well chosen name. The events surrounding its establishment had not the historic significance which attached to the founding of The Forks Fort by the great explorer Mackenzie, but his failure to grasp the magic of a name has deprived that establishment of much it otherwise might claim. Fort Dunvegan, established by a McLeod of Skye, gained by inheritance the glamour of an ancestral name and the traditions of an ancient clan. The name is derived from that of the castle of the MacLeods on the north-west coast of the Island of Skye, a castle which is stated, on good authority, to date back to before the year 1000. ⁴³ For many generations the ruling family of that clan have borne the name Norman, and that circumstance, combined with the name that Archibald Norman McLeod gave to his new fort, is strong evidence that he came from that region in Skye, and indeed may have been a member of the Dunvegan family itself. He was probably born about the year 1770, and there is some indication that he was related to Alexander Mackenzie. In the summer of 1805 McLeod had attended the meeting at Fort William, and on 12th July Harmon met him near Rainy lake as McLeod was on his way back to Peace river. He took with him Harmon's assistant and great friend, F. Good-ike. They little thought at the time that they would meet

again within three years at the new fort on Peace river which McLeod was then on his way to build.

The site of Dunvegan is fifty seven miles above Smoky Forks. It was occupied in the summer of this year (1805), but the buildings were then only begun. The great work of putting up the palisade and bastions was carried out during the succeeding winter and the early months of 1806. There may be more than a fanciful resemblance between the events when Fort Dunvegan was established in 1805 and when Fort Calgary, the forerunner of the present great city, was founded just seventy years later. In each case a MacLeod was in charge of the surrounding country, and in each case the clan name had already been given to another establishment in the same region. If the name of the ancestral castle on the storm swept coast of Skye had not been given to the fort on Peace river, might not the City of the Foothills be known today as Dunvegan? 44

Our first glimpse of the site of Fort Dunvegan is gained during Mackenzie's journey up Peace river in 1793, when on May 11th he met a chief of the Beaver Indians. But its first white visitor did not honour the site by landing. On the contrary he did all he could to get his men away from surroundings which might delay the journey. He had, however, to make tardy amends by camping a mile further on. The chief hastened to welcome Mackenzie to his domains. He did not put it exactly that way, but "the melancholy story" that his tribe were in want of every thing which the white man could so easily supply was the same thing in different words. Quite probably, it was then that the idea of an establishment first took form. Thompson also notes the same place when in March 1804 he went up the river to Rocky Mountain House. He records, after one of his courses had been entered, "Beginning of this course a good point for camping; one mile gone, the two brooks of the plains." In

other words, this good camp was, ^{as} ~~is~~ is modern Dunvegan, a mile below the two streams on opposite sides of the river. Thompson actually camps at the site on his return journey down the river.

We have a copy of the journal of Fort Dunvegan from 18th April to 14th October 1806. It recounts the building of the fort, and tells of several incidents of the first year of its existence. The journal records a summer season, so that we have less about fur trade and more of other items than is usual in such old journals. The name of the writer is not disclosed. He effaces himself to a remarkable extent and, on the rare occasions when he has to refer to himself, he uses such words as "we" and "ourselves". The word "I" never occurs. The writer must have been in charge of the establishment during this summer, 1806, although there is no note of personal authority in his way of writing. What evidence we have points to Alexander Roderick McLeod as the writer, even though his name occurs several times. The only other person of standing who was at Dunvegan during this summer was Fred. Geodike, and he was absent for much of the time. Extracts from the journal, with some notes on its contents, will be found on pages 122 to 134.

During the spring of 1806 there were at least forty-five men employed at Dunvegan, in addition to the officers of the North West Company, and exclusive of any Indian hunters. When the journal begins the opening of navigation was at hand, and effort was being made to get the heavy work of building done before the men left for the East with the winter's fur returns. Canoes had also to be made, and not less than twenty men were engaged in making them and collecting gum and wattap. The necessary bark had been collected in the previous summer.

The logs for the palisade were hauled across the river by horses (on the ice), and were then carried by the men up

the hill, every man taking up four logs as his share. We are not told on which side of the river the fort was built. Dr. Bryce states it was on the south side and that a formal grant of the land was given by the Indians, but he does not quote his authority. ⁴⁵ In modern times it has been on the north side, and the present writer would interpret what little can be gathered from the journal as indicating that side, rather than the south side which is not so good a site. During the last week of April ten men were working at the canoes, and twenty-five or thirty were building the fort. On 28th April twelve men began putting up the palisade and continued at this work for several days. Digging the trench had previously occupied seven or eight men for several days. Nine fur laden canoes left for the east on 10th May, and two days later "Mr. McLeod bade us farewell for the summer and embarked in a light canoe with eight men. We are now remaining at the fort six men, eight women, and seven children, so that if we are few men, the women and children can make up for the deficiency."

When Archibald Norman McLeod reached Fort Chipewyan he was joined by James Mackenzie who was going to Montreal on his rotation of furlough. Alexander Henry reports them passing the mouth of Winnipeg river on 17th June 1806, five weeks after McLeod had left Dunvegan. ⁴⁶ Fort Chipewyan was to know James MacKenzie no more. On reaching Fort William he was appointed to the Kings Posts on the lower St. Lawrence, after having served for eleven years on Lake Athabasca. The Minutes of the North West Company on this occasion express the opinion that there were, at the time, too many wintering partners in the western part of the country.

The small garrison remaining at Dunvegan completed the interior work of the fort during the summer, made a garden, and faced the usual struggle to provide themselves with

food. Nor were instances of excitement and near tragedy wanting. The destruction of part of the fort by fire, the attempts of an Indian wife to put an end to her troubles, the children going about the fort crying for food when there was no food to give them—all these things should be read as they would appear if the reader were himself one of that small company, isolated on the banks of Peace river.

From this journal we might gather that the only Posts in operation on Peace river waters in this year (1806) were Fort McLeod across the mountains, established by Simon Fraser in the previous year; Rocky Mountain Portage at modern Hudson Hope in charge of Archibald McGillivray. Dunvegan in charge of A. N. McLeod with Goedike as lieutenant during the summer; and Fort Vermilion under William MacIntosh. Rocky Mountain Fort seems to have been closed in the previous year, when Fraser built Rocky Mountain Portage forty-five miles higher up the river, and McLeod's great establishment at Smoky Forks was vacant at least during the summer. The "Spacious garden," however, which in 1800 had excited the distant envy of James McKenzie at Fort Chipewyan, was of sufficient importance to have men sent from Dunvegan to attend to it during the season.

The statement by La Malice (17 August) that Fraser and McDougall had reached "Carriers' lake" on 26th July 1806 and were building there, is an important confirmation of the date on which Fraser established Fort St. James on Stuart lake, although the name "Carriers' lake" does not seem elsewhere to be used for Stuart lake.⁴⁷ The arrangement, referred to in the Journal on 18th September, for meeting the Indians at Epinette river is evidence that Fort St. John was established in the fall of this year (1806) as a substitute for the abandoned Rocky Mountain Fort. And the fact that the "Fer-a-Cheval Indians" were to assemble in October at Mr. McLeod's Old Fort, near the mouth of Whitemud

ON PEACE RIVER

77

river, implies that the Post called Encampment Island Fort was built about this time to replace Horse Shoe House. The position of this post is referred to later.

It is not easy to say whether Epinette river was South Pine or North Pine river. The former was called Sinew river in early years, and Mackenzie, when passing it in 1793, refers to its location as affording an excellent site for a factory. Although the name Pine is now restricted to the south tributary, the northern one, now called Beaton river, really had a prior right, and seems to be the one called Epinette in the Dunvegan Journal: MacDonald in 1828 states that Fort d'Epinette had formerly stood 500-yards below the mouth of Epinette river and on the same side of Peace river. ⁴⁸ He does not definitely say he is referring to the north side or the north tributary, but that seems to have been his intention. This old fort must be the Fort St. John of Harmon's time, while the fort similarly named which was Guy Hughes' station in 1823 when he and others were killed, stood higher up Peace river in the north west angle of the two rivers. The name St. John was clearly a North West Company name and was used for some ten years before the Hudson's Bay Co. reached the locality, but the origin of the name is unknown. It has been suggested that it was taken from some employee so named. In such case, however, the name is commonly pronounced Sinjohn, and there is no tradition that the fort name ^{was} ever so pronounced. Nevertheless the name St. John did occur among the men employed at the fort in its early years. The somewhat parallel case of Fort St. James, established about the same time, can hardly have been a mere coincidence.

The references in the Dunvegan journal to A. R. McLeod are the earliest we have regarding his activities. His name occurs in the 1806 arrangements, but by clerical error the initials are given as "A. M. McLeod." He was probably the Mr.

McLeod who was to assist Wentzel in July 1800. Two or three years after these events at Dunvegan, A. R. McLeod was in charge of Rocky Mountain Portage, and in later years, before the union, he took a secondary part in the contests against the Hudson's Bay Company on Peace river and at Chipewyan.

At the union he became chief trader, and many years later gave great assistance to Captain Back in his northern explorations, for which he was promoted chief factor. Back gave his name to the easterly bay of Great Slave lake. In the earlier years A. R. McLeod was known as young Roderick McLeod, and in a document of 1816, he is described as a man of powerful physique, a common characteristic among the Nor'westers.

By 11th October 1806 Archibald Norman McLeod was back at Dunvegan from Fort William, and so far as we know he spent that winter and the next at Dunvegan. He signs as wintering partner up to 1807 inclusive, but his name is absent in 1808, in which summer he presumably became agent at Montreal. At any rate he was in the east during the war of 1812, and we have his signature as agent in 1813.

Daniel MacKenzie, who had been at Fort Chipewyan at least as early as 1793, but later was in the Upper Fort des Prairies (Edmonton) region, succeeded James MacKenzie at Fort Chipewyan when the latter went east to the Kings Posts in 1806. He was the fourth MacKenzie in succession to be a leader on lake Athabasca. Daniel MacKenzie, like Roderick (of Terrebonne), was of a quiet disposition and there is no record of his taking any aggressive part in the troubles of later years. In fact, he somewhat bitterly complained, after the Semple massacre at Red River, that he was always suspected by his fellow partners of a wish to join the colony.⁵⁰

XIII. 1808-1812.

Harmon arrives — Journey up Peace river — Fort Vermilion — Encampment Island — Dunvegan — Posts in 1807 — John McGillivray — Harmon goes to New Caledonia — Colin Campbell — War of 1812.

There arrived at Dunvegan on 10 October 1808 a man who is deservedly given a high place among the wintering partners. This was D. W. Harmon of the North West Co. who has left not only a reputation for an honourable life, but one of the best of all journals kept by a trader. His journal, as we have it, begins in April 1800 when, twenty two years old, he first left Montreal for the West. After eight years spent to the north of lake Superior, and in the region around Fort Dauphin to the west of lake Winnipegosis, he was suddenly ordered in July 1808 to Peace River country. He reached Fort Chipewyan on 7th September. After a couple of weeks there, during which he says "people have been flocking in from almost every corner of this extensive department," he ascended Peace river, but we have exasperatingly little information about the river in his journal.⁵¹ Eighteen days were spent on the journey from Chipewyan to Dunvegan, yet we have entries for only four days, and those entries of the most meagre description. His published journal has suffered from excessive elimination, either by himself or by some editor, for it is incredible that so many days should have been omitted throughout the original as are wanting in what we have.

Harmon mentions only two Posts as he journeys up to Dunvegan. Ten days after he left Chipewyan he enters in his journal, "October 2. Fort Vermilion, which is at present in

charge of a Mr. William MacIntosh who passed the summer here." ⁵² Then we have the entry Encampment Island on October 7th, and finally Dunvegan on October 10th. Harmon was travelling with the brigade returning from Fort William, and his total time from Fort Chipewyan to Dunvegan would require an average of thirty-two miles a day. Such a rate would not allow much delay, so that we may consider he was travelling every day, and we may therefore roughly proportion the distances between the posts according to the number of days between his entries. In the Dunvegan journal we find that the loaded brigade, which reached there on 12 October 1806, had taken the same time as Harmon — eight days — to travel from Fort Vermilion to Dunvegan. This distance was 264 miles, and such travelling would require an average of thirty three miles per day.

The location of Encampment Island Fort can only be estimated from indirect evidence. Harmon refers to it twice, but nowhere else has any reference to it been found. Both David Thompson and Archibald MacDonald apply the name Encampment to one of the islands, as they travel on the river, but the sites are too far apart to refer to the same island. From this we might infer that the name was applied, at various times to many islands. The fort had not been established at the date of Thompson's journey in 1804, and seems to have passed out of remembrance in 1828 when MacDonald passed up the river as he makes no mention of it. Thompson's "Campment Island" seems to be identical with modern Tar island which is twenty four miles below the present town of Peace River. Gas comes up there through the sand and has often been used for cooking, and the island forms a good camping place. The "Ile de Campement" recorded by MacDonald seems to be eighteen miles below Cadotte river and about thirty eight miles below the namesake of Thompson's time. Such evidence as can be gathered from a variety of comparisons rather favours Thompson's island as

the one where Encampment Island Fort was located. It is in section 10, township 87, range 20. Its distance from Fort Vermilion of those years is 177 miles, and it is 87 miles further to Dunvegan. These distances would agree fairly with the proportion of five days and three days which Harmon took to travel the two distances. The site of MacDonald's island (section 11, township 91, range 21) would not agree with these times at all. Harmon's statement that Fort Vermilion was about 60 miles above the Falls might, at first sight, lead to the conclusion that Vermilion was then much lower down than the site which has been indicated as its location in the early years. But Harmon was misled by the same influences as misled Thompson into under-estimating distances. Thompson records the distances to the Falls as sixty eight miles while there is no doubt whatever that, in his time, Fort Vermilion was really 118 miles above the Falls. Old Fort Liard, which stood at the modern site of Fort Vermilion, is not mentioned either by Harmon in 1808 nor by MacDonald in 1828. It had probably been closed during the great changes which occurred in 1805 and 1806.

Encampment Island Fort does not rank as an important establishment. If there should be any local tradition as to the remains of an early post below the present town of Peace River, it should be remembered that MacDonald mentions that there was a place called "Colin Campbell's House" which seems to have been about twenty miles below the town, and that in comparatively modern times, about the year 1862, Mr. H. K. Moberly built a house not far from the mouth of Cadotte river. ⁵⁴

On reaching his journey's end at Dunvegan, Harmon notes, "This is a well built fort, pleasantly situated with plains on each side of the river. At this place I expect to pass the ensuing winter. There will also be here Messrs Donald McTavish, Joseph McGillivray, J. G. McTavish and thirty

two men." ⁵⁵ A few days later he mentions that his friend Geodike left for St. John's, 120 miles up the river, where he is to pass the winter. This is the earliest reference we have to the name St. John. Harmon's estimate of the distance is good.

We have some slight additional evidence as to the number of posts which existed on Peace river about this time in a document which is itself undated, but which is endorsed "Sketch of the Fur Trade in 1809." ⁵⁶ It is here stated that there were twelve posts in "Athabasca department, including the Peace River, Slave Lake and Mackenzie's River." As, however, it is also stated that there were three posts "on the west side of the Rocky Mountains," this would indicate that the document was not brought up to the date endorsed, for a fourth post had been built in that region in the fall of 1807. These four were the posts on McLeod, Stuart, and Fraser lakes, and also Fort George. If we might reason on this basis, the twelve posts would have existed about 1807 rather than in 1809. We might surmise as follows:— Chipewyan, two on Great Slave lake, two or three on Mackenzie river, which would leave about six to be accounted for on Peace river. Such would be Liard (present Vermilion, closed before 1808), Upper Vermilion, Encampment Island, Dunvegan, St. John and Rocky Mountain Portage. The evidence is slight, but indicates there can be no great error in this enumeration.

Early in December 1808 Harmon was visited by John McGillivray, who had come from his post at Lesser Slave lake by a route which afforded the traders on the upper part of Peace river a much shorter communication with the east than the one by-way of Ile à la Crosse, Chipewyan and then up the river. Mackenzie refers to this road when he says that those Crees who invaded the upper part of the valley of Peace river, by way of Lesser Slave lake, continued hostile

to the Beaver Indians for some time after peace had been made by those other Crees who had gone down Athabasca river to the lower valley of Peace river. The road was, for many years after Harmon's time, used only as an express route and for individual travellers. All through the history of the fur trade water routes were used for heavy transport, and this Lesser Slave route involved eighty miles of a land portage, and a bad road at that.

John McGillivray was at this time one of the senior wintering partners. His earliest appearance is in the year 1796 when he was a clerk on Churchill river, but as he became partner only five years after that date he must have entered the service considerably earlier. He had command at Lesser Slave lake on different occasions between 1801 and 1810 when he succeeded Harmon in charge of Dunvegan. At first glance one would suppose he was a brother of the other three well known partners William, Duncan and Simon, but nothing has been found to confirm or deny such a supposition. He was an able man, and his name occurs again and again. It is strange so little is known about his connection to the others of the same family.

After a week's visit, probably in the capacity of inspector, as Harmon was then new to Peace River country, John McGillivray returned to Lesser Slave lake. Immediately after the new year (1809) Harmon despatched the winter express by the same route. It was to go down Lesser Slave river, then up Athabaska river and its tributary the Pembina, and then across country to Fort des Prairies, now known as Edmonton. Thus the traders on the upper part of Peace river, although they had dragged a lengthening chain of heavy transport as one post succeeded another up the river, yet at the end they were nearer their friends outside than were their fellows at Fort Chipewyan.

The fur returns of Dunvegan, in which were included those of Fort St. John, left early in May 1809, in eleven canoes. Even allowing for the weight of men and provisions, such a number of canoes, each of which carried two tons and coming from two posts only, gives some idea of the amount of fur which was leaving the North West at this period. Harmon calls attention to the necessity of making new canoes for each season's trade. Indeed the collection of bark and other materials was a very heavy labour at all the posts. When the brigade had left with most of the officers who had wintered with Harmon, he writes gratefully of their companionship. "The greatest harmony prevailed amongst us, the days glided on smoothly, and the winter passed almost imperceptibly away", a description so well worded that it gives us a good insight into Harmon's character.

Five days after the Dunvegan returns had gone, Simon Fraser and James McDougal came down the river. Fraser brought the returns from Rocky Mountain Portage and McDougall those from New Caledonia.

They passed on to join the great throng, then converging from all over the West on Fort William. These are the only two brigades mentioned by Harmon as passing in that spring (1809), but John Stuart came in July from over the mountains to get provisions, that is moose and buffalo meat. Harmon speaks highly of Stuart, and this good opinion was reciprocated. Ross Cox quotes a letter from John Stuart, dated 25th April, 1815, in which the following occurs: "Messrs. MacDougall and Harmon are with me in this department. They are not only excellent traders, but, what is a greater novelty in this country, real christians, and I wish their steady and pious example were followed by others." 57 This remark should go far to put an end to an idea, frequently suggested, that the serious remarks in Harmon's

journal were inserted by the reverend editor who had it published in 1820.

After a sojourn of two years at Dunvegan, Harmon on 6th October 1810 received a letter, signed by three of the partners at Fort William, in which he was asked to become superintendent of New Caledonia or, if he preferred, to go to that region as second in command under John Stuart during the winter, and then to take over the district. This was a somewhat peculiar order, and Harmon's choice of the less responsible of the two positions does not impress us as being that of a strong character. Yet it may have been due to loyalty to some wish of Stuart. Harmon went up Peace river with Stuart, and on his way stopped at Fort St. John and Rocky Mountain Portage. He does not mention who was in charge at either post, but makes it clear the latter establishment was at the eastern, not western, end of the portage road. But it is not so clear whether it was on the north or south side of Peace river. Present Hudson's Hope is, of course, on the north side, but it formerly stood south of the river. Archibald MacDonald on 2nd September 1828 records that, after they had reached the first resting place on the portage as they were going west, they camped "on the first fine level above the water, and have the old Mountain House right opposite, on the south side." But there is no assurance that the old House referred to by MacDonald may not itself have been a later post than Fraser's establishment. Why should Fraser place a post, which was mainly to be a stopping place on his way up Peace river, on the far side from the portage road? *Nevertheless the original Post was on the South side of Peace river*

J. W. W.

When Harmon paid a visit to Dunvegan in February 1813, about two and a half years later, he found John MacGillivray in charge, with Colin Campbell as assistant. MacGillivray remained at Dunvegan for at least three years, until the summer of 1816. In July of that year he was at

Fort William, and William MacGillivray writes to Archibald McLellan that John can be spared from the Athabasca (that is Peace river) during that year, as McLeod is going there.⁵⁸ It is improbable that John MacGillivray ever returned to Peace river. In the spring of this year he had written from Dunvegan that he was a victim of rheumatism, and he must then have been fifty years old. He was of the same generation as William MacGillivray, who had retired to the less strenuous life of a Montreal agent. Wentzel tells us that John MacGillivray retired in 1818. Harmon speaks appreciatively of him: "An amiable and excellent man, and I have enjoyed his society highly."

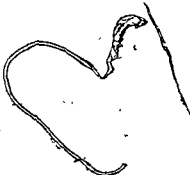
Colin Campbell cannot have been much over twenty five years of age when we hear of his being at Dunvegan in 1813. Like many another clerk of that period he had spent his early years of service on Churchill river. He remained on Peace river for more than thirty years, long after the union of the two Companies, and many of the years as chief trader in charge at Dunvegan.

The war of 1812 must not be forgotten for, although it was fought far away from Peace river, it had some bearing on the movements of the wintering partners. In the latter part of 1812 the North West Company, knowing that many of their officers and men were experienced in transportation, offered to raise a Corps of Voyageurs. As a result John McDonell, Archibald Norman McLeod, James Hughes, Pierre de Rocheblave, and William MacKay were authorized to enroll all who had been voyageurs, and to assemble them at Montreal in October of that year. William MacGillivray was given a commission as colonel while Angus Shaw and A. N. McLeod were majors. Among the officers of this Corps of Canadian Voyageurs, the Provincial Voyageurs and the Terrebonne battalion the names of several of the wintering partners, who spent some years in Peace River

region are found. Such are Roderick Mackenzie, John Finlay, David Thompson, Simon Fraser, Joseph MacGillivray. The name John MacGillivray occurs among the Canadian Voyageurs as ensign, a rank hardly commensurate with a partner. It is, however, also found as that of a captain among those wintering partners whose commissions, giving rank in the militia and Indian countries, were cancelled by General Order, 17th August 1816, during the Red River troubles. This John MacGillivray must be the partner who had been at Dunvegan. While none of the Peace river partners seems to have shone in military ability, good work was done in transport on St. Lawrence river, a duty which they all thoroughly understood. Selkirk appears to be unduly sarcastic about the raising of these Voyageurs. He claims it was all a scheme to hold the men for the next season's trade. Be that as it may, the commissions were certainly used, long after the war, to add authority to their holders in matters of the fur trade. ⁵⁹

XIV. 1813-1815.

Hudson's Bay Company's plans — Objections to advancing up Peace river — Selkirk and Colin Robertson organize expedition — John Clarke — Travels to Chipewyan — Want of provisions — Clarke goes up Peace river — Troubles at Vermilion



During all these years the Hudson's Bay Company, had made no advance up Peace river. Indeed the whole region of the lower Athabasca river and all of Peace river had remained in undisputed possession of its rivals, ever since the region had first been entered by white men, with the exception of Turnor's visit to Lake Athabaska in 1791 and the short period, from 1802 to 1806, during which Fidler maintained Nottingham House on the same lake. The Athabaska country, as the whole region was generally called, was not only very distant from York Factory, which the Hudson's Bay Co. still regarded as the hub from which the fur trade must expand, but it was beyond the limits of their charter which in that part of the West ended at Methy Portage. The Company had, indeed, trouble in maintaining its ground even as far as Ile à la Crosse which was well within their charter. Harmon, who passed there on his way to Peace river in 1808, makes no reference to any Hudson's Bay Co. Post.

There were serious difficulties in the way of the Hudson's Bay Co. before they could obtain a footing on Peace river, so much so that there were opinions within the Company itself that the river had better be left alone. On 1st February 1809 Alexander Henry, then at Fort Vermilion on North Saskatchewan river, writes to Duncan Cameron: "My brother, who winters at Lac Cariboux (Reindeer lake) writes us that the lower English river (Churchill) is swarming

with oatmeal eaters. He is opposed himself by no less a personage than Governor Auld. of Churchill and Fidler who have a great stock of goods and men, and are thus far advanced in their voyage towards Athabasca. It seems they are determined once more to make a bold push in the ensuing spring, by way of Lac la Hache (Wollaston Lake). Their plan is to proceed to the northwards and have nothing to do with Peace river. That turbulent old Tomison is the principal instigator of this plan, and should the philosopher, David Thompson, succeed in making good returns in beaver on the Columbia, we may rest assured that Bird will attempt sending there the ensuing summer".⁶⁰

This letter indicates that so experienced a trader as Tomison was apparently in favour of the Hudson's Bay Co. avoiding the region of Peace river altogether, and that the Company might follow this opinion by splitting off to the northwest and going down Mackenzie river, and to the southwest and going over the mountains, thus leaving Peace river alone for the time being, but enclosing it on two sides. It was a good prophecy as regards the region across the mountains, for we know that in 1810 Howse was sent after "the philosopher, David Thompson," but it seems to have failed in reference to Peace river, as a movement was certainly made on the road to that region, by the re-establishment of Ile à la Crosse by Fidler in the year of Henry's letter. Whether, however, any advance in charge of such a man as Fidler could seriously be considered "a bold push" is very doubtful. It is surprising that he should been selected. He had no better success at Ile à la Crosse than he had at Nottingham House on lake Athabaska, and he was soon forced by his rivals to abandon his charge.

No further step seems to have been taken in the general advance towards Peace River by the Hudson's Bay Company for a few years. In the winter 1812-1813 rumours of a

contemplated invasion began to reach the wintering partners on the river. In January 1814 John MacGillivray writes from Dunvegan "We were apprehensive of an invasion from the Hudson's Bay Company last spring by accounts received from Mr. Wills of Red River." Nothing happened even in the next spring, but in the fall of 1814 some of the men intended for an expedition were sent in advance. Hugh McGillis, who was the wintering partner at the west end of Lesser Slave lake, states that when he was on his way to his post he overtook some Highlanders and Irish at Grand Rapids, where the Saskatchewan river falls into lake Winnipeg. Using Gaelic as an introduction he learned from them that they were to winter at Ile à la Crosse, and in the spring (1815) they would proceed to Athabaska. McGillis adds that as he is himself only five days' ride from his friend John MacGillivray in Peace River he has it in his power to "visit that celebrated country and satisfy curiosity." From this we may gather that the romance which attends Peace River even to this day has existed from an early date. ⁶¹

Selkirk was at this time in a position of influence in the Hudson's Bay Company, and in the winter 1814-1815 he made plans in conjunction with Colin Robertson for an expedition on a large scale to Peace River. With Robertson in charge and John Clarke second in command quite a pretentious brigade of twenty two canoes left Montreal in May 1815. When in July they reached Red River Settlement Robertson found that the conditions of the Colony were such that he had to remain there, and Clarke took over charge of the expedition. He was first to go to Jack River Post, later called Norway House, to get his trading goods which had been forwarded to that post from York Factory. These goods having been taken on board, Clarke left Jack River on his long journey on 4th August 1815. Duncan Campbell, a namesake of the N. W. Co. partner, had left about three weeks earlier in charge of an advance party. ⁶²

John Clarke, who was now to play a conspicuous part on Peace river, had been in the fur-trade for fifteen years, and had an extensive knowledge of the western country. At this time he was thirty four years old. The earliest reference to his service occurs in the MS journal of D. W. Harmon, when on 25th May 1800 Harmon was travelling along the north shore of lake Huron on his initial journey to the West. He has the entry "In the after part of the day the canoe in which is my old friend Mr. Clarke, overtook us," and together they travelled to Grand Portage. This reference of Harmon to his friendship with Clarke, whose mother was related to Astor of New York, may have some bearing on Harmon's joining the North West Company.

Clarke almost immediately went down Mackenzie river where he established a Post above the present site of Fort Norman. It may indeed have been the first site of a post so named. Its situation is indicated in a letter written in July 1853 by James Anderson who was then in charge of Mackenzie river. He wrote that there was a general desire to have Fort Norman (as it existed in that year) moved "about four winter days journey upstream to the vicinity of Old Fort Clarke." 63

It was not long before Clarke left Mackenzie river, and in 1804 David Thompson found him at (Upper) Fort Vermilion. There is a long gap between that date and May 1810 during which his activities are unknown. At the latter date Harmon somewhat casually remarks that Clarke passed Dunvegan with his brigade from Fort St. John, on his way to Rainy lake. It is doubtful if he returned west as in 1811 he left Montreal to join Astor's Pacific Fur Company, and went with the second party to Columbia river. When Astoria was taken over by the North West Company, Clarke remained for a short time, but there was friction between him and his associates and he crossed the continent with Franchere

in 1814, and again reached Montreal. There he was engaged by Selkirk, or rather by Colin Robertson who was himself a former Nor'Wester, in connection with the great expedition then being organized for Peace River. Much of the rancour against Clarke, which existed among the wintering partners when he arrived there, was due to his leading an expedition into the very region where for several years he had been associated with those against whom he was now contending.

After ten days travel from Norway House Clarke reached Cumberland House, and, at once, his troubles began. The North West Company at this place missed nothing which might hinder him, even going so far as to seize some of his men. Two of their partners followed Clarke all the way west with the avowed intention of stirring up trouble. When the expedition, now much larger than when it left Montreal, arrived at Ile à la Crosse, Robert Logan was left to take charge of a Post there, while Decoigne was sent to Lesser Slave lake. The latter was to reach his destination by going up Beaver and Waterhen rivers to Cold lake, then by portage back to Beaver river, down la Biche river and then by way of Athabaska and Lesser Slave rivers to the lake. This was a kind of secondary route travelled in those years, but later it was entirely abandoned. The purpose of this side expedition was, no doubt, to take the enemy on Peace river in the rear by using the overland route from Lesser Slave lake to the upper part of Peace river valley. ⁶⁴

Even at this early date the matter of provisions for Clarke's party was becoming serious. He went ahead of his brigade from Ile à la Crosse to secure supplies by hunting buffalo and moose, but, himself half starved, he had to wait at Lac la Roche for the brigade. He was beginning to realise the tactics by which the North West Company proposed the repel his invasion. However, the party obtained six buffalo killed on Athabaska river, and on 4th October

1815 the expedition arrived at Lake Athabaska where they found Duncan Campbell's advance party. ⁶⁵

Winter was now coming on. A new post, called Fort Wedderburn after the Countess of Selkirk, was established on the island in front of Fort Chipewyan which at that time was called Coal Island, but it is known now as Potato island. Clarke's original intention seems to have been to keep his party together for some time but, without sufficient food, it became necessary to divide the men into different districts. The plan of campaign of their rivals now became apparent. It was nothing less than preventing the Indians from intercourse with Clarke's party. This was serious enough in regard to trading in fur but it was disastrous when, without the aid of Indian hunters, food could not be secured to keep the men from starvation. The vigilance of the North West Co. and their immense power over the Indians in that country, had been gravely underestimated not only by Selkirk, who might easily have been mis-informed, but by Clarke himself who should have known the conditions with which he would be faced, for there were few traders who had more experience in dealing with Indians. Clarke decided to divide his forces. Campbell and Roderick Mackenzie with 14 men were to remain at Fort Wedderburn, MacAulay and Bourassa were to take 13 men and go down Slave river and winter at Great Slave lake, while Thomas and 12 men were to go up Athabaska river as far as Pierre au Calumet. Clarke himself took Messrs. George McDougall, Yale, Cook, Laronde, Godin and Nolin, and with no less than 48 men set out for Peace river. "On 9 October we embarked without a single ounce of provisions," Clarke subsequently reported to Selkirk, "our sole dependence being on a Cree Indian to hunt for us." Dangerous enough this would have been if they had been going into neutral country, dependent only on winning over the Indians. But matters were far more ser-

ious. Their rivals were, at the time, in absolute command of the river. For twenty five years, ever since white men first explored it, the Indians had seldom seen any other white chiefs in control. Even during the rivalry between the North West and X. Y. Companies the Indians had been dealing with the self-same masters as were now united among themselves.

John McGillivray of Dunvegan happened to be at lake Athabaska at this time (October 1815). A few days before Clarke left the lake on his way up Peace river McGillivray directed some of the North West Company men to go in advance, and drive the wild animals from the vicinity of the river, so that Clarke's men might have nothing to eat. McGillivray states that Clarke's "squadron of invasion of this river" consisted of eight canoes, six clerks, and fifty men, which is remarkably in agreement with Clarke's own report. Five days after the "armada" had started, McGillivray followed and on his third day overtook it. He comments on the serious predicament in which Clarke was finding himself, and on the emaciated appearance of his men. Yet McGillivray does not hesitate to say that he kept close watch on his own men lest they might clandestinely give food to their rivals.⁶⁶ Similar statements of ruthless treatment of rivals are common enough in the old journals which tell of the conflict between the N. W. Co. and the X. Y. Co. It is not easy for us to understand such things between men of the same race when only commercial supremacy was at stake. We may safely assume that in some cases, at least, the ruthlessness was more written about than actually existent. Much of what occurs in old journals or letters should be scrutinised. It was tempting for a writer to represent himself as very zealous against his employers' rivals, and to tone down, or colour up, events. Where the interests of a writer or of his employers are at stake, entries in journals or letters can only be regarded as *ex parte* testimony. We

might come to very different conclusions if we could expose such entries to cross examination. When Simon Fraser writes to Stuart to look over McDougall's journals and point out anything that "is not necessary to be in them" before they are copied to be sent east, he does not inspire us with confidence that everything will be told. Yet even allowing for excessive colouring in the contemporary statements about this rivalry on Peace river, matters were often so acute that we cannot ascribe them to mere trade rivalry. As time went on during this period and each local affray became broadcast over the whole Northwest, with no loss in the telling, conditions became those of a feud. A match struck at any time was sure to fall on material ready for a conflagration. ⁶⁸

It was not difficult for John MacGillivray to get to Fort Vermilion before Clarke's party. William MacIntosh was in charge of that post and had with him Alexander Roderick McLeod and Archibald MacGillivray. Orders were given to the Indians that they must have no dealings with Clarke's men, not even if they were starving, and as many of the Indians as possible were sent away from the locality. The party advanced slowly up the river, and then Clarke and Yale went on ahead and reached Fort Vermilion on 27th October. This establishment was not then at its present site, but 67 miles higher up the river. There Clarke found matters no less serious than they had been at lake Athabaska. He could get nothing done by the Indians. The North Westers treated him and Yale with open contempt, so as to belittle them before the Indians. Yale's private box was broken open, his gun taken from him, and Clarke's expostulations were merely ridiculed. ⁶⁹

Clarke now went further up the river, but he found his steps were dogged by the vigilant rivals and he was not allowed to make any arrangements with the Indians in the

way of getting moose or buffalo meat to feed his men. He states that on this occasion he went on foot for four days without food before finding any Indians.⁷⁰ He must have been as far as the site of Horse Shoe House, eighteen miles above Notekiwin (Battle) river, for Archibald MacDonald, when passing its site in 1828, remarks: "Here Messrs. Clarke and Black had a rencontre in 1815." If it was of a physical nature the onlookers must have had an interesting exhibition, for both were powerful men and neither was accustomed to take second place, no matter where he might be. Meanwhile John McGillivray had hastened up the river to his own headquarters at Dunvegan where Colin Campbell had been left in charge. Writing in May of the following year to Robb and Cowie of Montreal Campbell relates: "We passed a quiet and successful summer and were contented until 24th September (1815) when I got news of this great, great invincible opposition that was coming to drive us out of this country. Mr. McGillivray passed Mr. Clarke and reached here, where we soon got every Indian out of the way."⁷¹

XV. 1815-1817.

Clarke's expedition unable to advance — Some of the party attempt to return. — George McDougall gives up trading goods to N. W. Co. — Men brought up the river by N. W. Co. and sent east to Lesser Slave lake — Clarke's efforts — Returns to Chipewyan — Roderick MacKenzie, "senior" — Elation of N. W. Co. — A. N. McLeod becomes superintendent — Attack on Red River colony — McLeod reaches Chipewyan — Hector McNeill — Clarke's second expedition, fail of 1816 — McLeod arrests Clarke — Winter 1816-17 — Main basis of troubles.

While Clarke was up the river trying to get provisions, Archibald of the numerous clan McGillivray seized the opportunity to go down stream from Vermilion, to find out what Clarke's main party was doing. It was in charge of George McDougall, brother of James who had pioneered the region around McLeod lake at the southerly source of Peace river. How the two brothers came to be ranged in opposite camps does not appear. McDougall was found to be in a bad way, on the verge of starvation, as yet hardly past Loon (Wabiskaw) river, and the ice already closing in on them. One section, made up of twelve men, had already left, under the leadership of Nolin, to try to retrace their steps to Lake Athabaska. Matters were so hopeless for McDougall with his remaining eighteen men that he really had only the alternative of surrendering or of seeing his whole party starved. He agreed to deliver up all articles for trading which had been brought with so much toil over the immense distance from York Factory, and that neither he nor any of his party now left would serve against the North West Co. for one year. Disaster overtook the unfortunate section who struggled to get back to lake Athabaska. Nolin was drowned, and every man, except three, perished by starva-

tion and cold, most of them dying near Point Providence. ⁷²

McGillivray brought McDougall's party to Fort Vermilion. All were in a weak condition and one died on the journey. Instead of sending these men back to lake Athabaska where, no doubt, the North Westers feared they might be induced to join forces with those left there under Duncan Campbell and Roderick MacKenzie, they were all taken up Peace river to Dunvegan. From there they were sent to the east to Lesser Slave lake by the overland route and then out to Fort des Prairies. McDougall himself made his way across the mountains to his brother at Stuart lake, and Harmon tells us that while McDougall was there in April of the following year (1816) he engaged him for two years service with the North West Company.

When Clarke returned to Fort Vermilion, having met with some success in getting Indians to hunt for him, he learned of the disaster which had befallen MacDougall whom he terms his head clerk. Clarke himself still had fourteen men and three clerks with him, but without adequate supply of trading goods it was impracticable to obtain meat from the Indians. Three more of his men died since he reached Fort Vermilion, and seeing his people die before his eyes, as he wrote later, and no hope of speedy relief, he was compelled to give in on condition that his men would be fed until they could reach Fort Wedderburn. ⁷³ Apparently Clarke must have held out for a considerable time as it was so late as 8th February 1816 when all reached Wedderburn. Simon Fraser and Edward Smith were then at Fort Chipewyan, the latter a wintering partner who had spent many years on Mackenzie river. With them Clarke made some agreement that, if his party was supplied until May, he would have no dealing with the Indians. He found that those who had been left at Fort Wedderburn in the previous fall under Duncan Campbell and Roderick MacKenzie had maintained

themselves during the winter, although very little or no trade had been done.

Both Clarke and Bird wrote later to Selkirk in praise of the zeal and firmness shown by Roderick MacKenzie while he had been in charge during the winter. He was then about 40 years of age, and had a long subsequent career in the Hudson's Bay Company, being still active as chief factor at Ile à la Crosse as late as 1843, at which time he says he was approaching seventy years of age. He was known in the records as Roderick MacKenzie, senior, and should be distinguished from both his predecessor on lake Athabaska who built the original Fort Chipewyan, and also from captain Roderick who is mentioned by Ross Cox as being for many years in the Nipigon country.⁷⁴ The first and the last of these three became chief trader at the Union, but the captain retired or died in 1829, while Clarke's assistant was promoted chief factor in 1830. He is mentioned by the explorers Franklin and Thomas Simpson.

Matters had not gone well for the Hudson's Bay Co. on Great Slave lake in this winter 1815-16. Archibald McLellan, the North West Company partner who there had been matched against McAulay, boasted in a letter to "my dear McTavish" that he had compelled McAulay to give up in seventeen days, and that his own Company had sent out several hundred packs from the whole of Athabaska as against practically none by the Hudson's Bay Company.⁷⁵ McLellan had rather the character of a bully. "Your temper is warm; check it," was William McGillivray's advice to him on one occasion.

In the beginning of June Clarke left for Norway House with what was left of his original great brigade. The total loss of life on the expedition, while in the Peace river region, was at least seventeen persons, while the loss in other

ways could not be estimated. James Bird, the Hudson's Bay Company superintendent of the western region, reported to Selkirk that the disaster was so great it could not be exaggerated even by the North West Company. ⁷⁶ Amid the chorus of abuse hurled at Clarke by nearly every Nor'-wester in the country, there are one or two variants. George Keith, in a letter to Thomas Thain in July 1816, writes, "To give the man his due, we must acknowledge Clarke is an excellent leader. His men are kept in strict subordination without his appearing to be too severe, and he has a deal of influence with his clerks." And John McGillivray of Dunvegan, although he was particularly irate at Clarke's declared intention to make Dunvegan his headquarters, could not withhold a modicum of praise for "the unparalleled perseverance" of Clarke's party. ⁷⁷

So ended the first chapter of the attempt of the Hudson's Bay Company to establish itself on Peace river but it was not the last chapter by any means, as those who know the traditional persistence of that Company, need not be told. The North West Company were elated at their success, and looked with confidence to the future. George Keith, in the letter already quoted, writes, "This year (1816) we have got ample reinforcements (for Athabasca) of men and goods, and Mr. McLeod, after considerable discussion, has been clothed with the title of Superintendent and we hope to drive the H. B. Co. out of Athabasca again." On every hand there was satisfaction that Archibald Norman McLeod was going to winter in Peace river region. Hughes, whose post at the time was Edmonton (Fort des Prairies) writes from Fort William at the same time as Keith's letter, to John McTavish, "Mr. McCloud is to winter in Athabasca. He will be of service for, you know, il peut faire le grand, and that is important among the Indians, especially a stout man, red coat, and long sword." This same red coat, a legacy of the war of 1812, was worked overtime, and even was lent

to others on occasion. Commissioner Coltman states, in his report, that the decision that McLeod should winter in the West was reached at Montreal before the full news of Peace river occurrences had reached there, and he quotes from a letter written by John McTavish to McLellan, in May 1816: "Mrs. and Miss McLeod are preparing to cross the Atlantic in consequence of his intention to winter." ⁷⁸

McLeod left Montreal in May 1816 and reached Red River a few days after the dreadful attack on the Colony in July, an attack for which he must share responsibility. From there he went back to Fort William, and shortly after set out for Peace river country. On reaching Fort Chipewyan on 15th September, McLeod lost no time in announcing that "he was going to bring the English in Athabaska into order, and would expel the H. B. Co. from the Indian Territory, and would destroy their establishments. Mr. John McGillivray and Mr. Simon Fraser had been entirely too lenient towards the servants of that company in the preceding year. It was ridiculous to be scrupulous in driving them out and destroying their posts, and he would stand at no trifle." ⁷⁹

Hostile as the leader of the clan McLeod on Peace river was against "the English" on his arrival, he was more so a couple of weeks later when John Stuart arrived from Fort William with the news that Selkirk had arrested many of their partners. The atmosphere around Fort Chipewyan was certainly not propitious for John Clarke when shortly afterwards in September 1816, he reached Fort Wedderburn for his second campaign. He had left lake Winnipeg before A. N. McLeod, but was overtaken by McLeod and Thomas McMurray while going down Athabaska river. In the few days which McLeod had at Fort Chipewyan before Clarke arrived he arrested Duncan Campbell whom Clarke had left in charge during the summer, and the stage was set. The North West Company had among their offic-

ers at Fort Chipewyan an Irishman named Hector McNeill, whose previous career in the British army is humorously recounted by Ross Cox. "McNeill's face," that writer says, "was in itself a letter of recommendation. Valour was then at a premium and his character, joined to his warlike visage, at once secured him a handsome engagement (with the N. W. Co.)." ⁸⁰ He was selected as being well qualified by disposition to pick a quarrel with the equally impetuous John Clarke, and he was sent to parade ostentatiously in front of Fort Wedderburn. It was not long before a general melee occurred, during which McNeil established a claim to the title of champion swordsman of lake Athabaska. These preliminaries having taken place more or less according to programme, McLeod proceeded to arrest Clarke, and then admitted him to bail on his giving up thirty packs of his trading goods. McNeill was later dispatched up Athabaska river to Pierre au Calumet where John Stuart was in charge, there to await an express which it was known Clarke would send out, and on its arrival, he seized the express and took it back to Chipewyan. In January the Hudson's Bay Co. post was occupied by their rivals by means of a trick, and many, if not all, of their weapons were taken. These are examples of the way matters stood all winter.

It would be impossible to sum up judicially all the facts on both sides during the whole rivalry on Peace river because very few of the contemporary statements were exposed to cross examination, and such evidence is not conclusive. There are, however, two or three general considerations which serve to explain a good deal. The North West Company regarded the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company on Peace river as an unjustifiable invasion of a river which they had been the first to explore and on which they had been well established for many years. If the claim of the North West Company to the trade of the river had no legal support, it had much basis in human nature. The Hudson's

Bay Company, while considering they had as much right as their rivals, were adverse to any offensive force being used. Their officers were thereby restricted in their actions while the North West Company partners were almost free lancers, and came from a race not slow to act on individual initiative. Lastly there was a constant undercurrent of bluster and threat on both sides which never materialised. Actual personal injury on either side was very rare in the seven years of rivalry on Peace river up to the Union in 1821. The object of the North West Company was not to kill or maim their rivals, but to prevent them from trading with the Indians. That was the reason for so many "arrests."

XVI. 1818-1819.

Robertson and Clarke — Third expedition, fall of 1818. — Clarke goes up Peace river — Affray at Vermilion — MacIntosh — St. Mary's House — Early posts near Smoky river — Ruins identified — Accounts of MacDonald, of Mair, and of Agnes Cameron — Fort McLeod — Winter 1818-19 — N. W. Co. brigade stopped by ice — J. G. McTavish — Contest between Black and Robertson at Chipewyan — Robertson taken east, but escapes at Cumberland — H. B. So. seize wintering partners at Grand Rapids.

Two attempts by the Hudson's Bay Company to establish trade on Peace river had now met with no success. Apparently very little was done during the remainder of the year 1817. The dangerous effect on the Indians of the white men's rivalry, may be seen in an incident referred to by Harmon. He states that when he was on a visit to Fort Chipewyan this summer, "the Indians to the number of about one hundred rose up in arms against us." Fortunately actual conflict was avoided. In the following summer (1818) Robertson himself went to Athabaska. From his affidavit of 23 September 1820 an outline of his movements in 1818, 1819 and 1820 can be obtained.⁸¹ We learn from this and from Wentzel's letters and other sources that Robertson and Clarke reached lake Athabaska in September 1818, their outfit including nineteen canoes and their parties more than 100 men. Robertson remained at Fort Wedderburn while Clarke got away up Peace river with ten well appointed canoes before the North West Company brigades had come in from the east.

When Clarke reached Fort Vermilion some kind of an affray ocured. It may be well to recall that this fort was at the same site as when Clarke himself had charge in 1804. It was familiar ground to him. According to a North West

Company account Clarke made a surprise attack on the fort, and actually gaining entrance, seized MacIntosh who was in charge. A spirited counter attack was then made in which Militaire, who had seen many years service on the river, distinguished himself, and Clarke's men were driven out. On the other hand the Hudson's Bay report stated that Clarke's object was only to rescue one of his clerks who had been sent in advance, and who had been seized by MacIntosh. On general principles it seems highly improbable that even so impetuous a leader as Clarke would plan an attack on a rival fort. What could he gain by such an act? If he was strong enough to take a fort by force, he would much better turn his energies to the business of out-trading his rival. That was what he was in the country for. It seems much more likely that Clarke dramatically entered the fort, and on his demand for the release of his man being refused, seized MacIntosh as a kind of hostage, whereupon the rest, as narrated by the North West Company would naturally have followed.

William MacIntosh, who now, for the second time, was prominently opposed to Clarke, was one of the outstanding wintering partners on Peace river. Early records mention both William and Donald MacIntosh, but the latter spent his life to the east of Lake Winnipeg. William was born in 1782 and he first appears at Lesser Slave lake in winter 1803-04. In 1806 he had already been transferred to Peace river and succeeded Clarke at Fort Vermilion, where he was still stationed in 1808 when Harmon passed up the river. William McGillivray writes from Fort William in 23rd July 1816, "Yesterday we made McBean, MacIntosh and Grant partners."⁸² This was evidently a reward for the part MacIntosh had taken in the affair with Clarke in 1815. MacIntosh was thus thirty four years old when made partner. He always showed himself as a man of courage and resource, and although given only the rank of chief trader at the Union

in 1821, he was promoted chief factor in the following year, and was for some time in charge of Dunvegan. His name is often spelled MacKintosh.

Clarke now made his way up Peace river, and it must have been on this occasion, the fall of 1818, that he established the post called St. Mary's House at Smoky Forks, a name derived from Selkirk's birthplace. Arch. MacDonald, when going up the river with Governor Simpson in 1828, refers to three former posts so named. He writes in his journal on 28th August, "Breakfasted a little below the lost St. Mary's House which is nearly opposite riviere le (Coeur). We all walked along the beach from Mr. Robertson's St. Mary's, which we passed at eleven A.M. and which is directly facing Clarke's original St. Mary's at the mouth of Smoky river. Dined at an old fort of Mr. Thompson's. This is a delightful country that we have passed through today." These remarks indicate that they walked along the northwesterly side of Peace river which is more attractive than the southeasterly side. The latter is a rough timbered area, and if they had been on that side they would have had to cross Smoky river. It is not apparent what he means by the lost St. Mary's. The word may be a misprint for last, that is the last established of the three similarly named posts, the first being Clarke's original St. Mary's.⁸³

The positions, at various times, of the early posts near Smoky Forks are very uncertain. The earliest of all was the one where Mackenzie wintered 1792-93. Its position, on the southeasterly side of Peace river and about five miles above the confluence, has recently been identified on the ground by Judge Howay who, with the assistance of Mr. J. H. Johnston, D. L. S., found the remains of five stone chimneys and of cellars which correspond with Mackenzie's description.⁸⁴ An interval of nearly ten years, however, occurs after Mackenzie's account; during which we know nothing of the

history of this fort. David Thompson arrived from Lesser Slave lake in 1802. It is clear from his notes that the post where he stayed was on the southeasterly side of Peace river, and the identity, within the limits of observation, of his latitude and that of Mackenzie shows that the two posts were at the same site. But we do not know whether that particular site was occupied continuously during the ten-year interval, nor whether any other post may have been built in the meantime. Ten years was a long time in those days for continuous occupation. In fact it would form the only case of a post established on Peace river before 1800 where occupation was so long.

Thompson states, in the summer of 1803, that the X. Y. Company are building a hundred yards higher up the river. The remains of an old post were actually found in December 1928 at this distance above Mackenzie's fort. The X. Y. Company united with the North West Company in 1804, and in the fall of 1805 the Forks seem to have been practically abandoned by the substitution of the new establishment at Dunvegan. During the long period from then until about 1875 we have no indication that any post was in operation near the Forks except for three or four years from about 1818 to 1821. Previously to 1815 the Hudson's Bay Company had no post anywhere on Peace river except a small outpost far down, in the lower part of the river, during the winter 1802-03. We see, then, that any remains near Smoky Forks of posts which were in operation before 1818 must be remains of North West Company posts (or of the X. Y. in the short period 1800-04). Posts which existed subsequently to that date may be assumed to have been Hudson's Bay Company posts. It is very unlikely that the North West Company ever operated a post at the Forks after 1806 although it was active on other parts of Peace river right up to the Union in 1821.

Turning now to the aspect of the remains to be seen on the ground in the vicinity of the Forks, it is remarkable how few are the available accounts. Mair refers to the subject when recounting his visit in 1899, but as he knew very little of the history of Peace river we can only regard him as a witness to facts on the ground. He writes, "The remains of the North-West-Company's fort are still visible on the north bank, a few miles above the Landing (modern Peace River town). On the south shore, in the angle between the two rivers, stood the Hudson's Bay Company's fort, whilst the old X. Y. Company's post, at that time the best equipped on the river, stood on the north bank opposite the Smoky." Mair examined only the last site, the information about the others being derived from a retired chief trader, Alexander Mackenzie, who had spent many years there. In 1907 Agnes Deans Cameron visited the same site as was examined by Mair, and she refers to it as the site of Fort McLeod.⁸⁵

The three accounts which have been referred to seem to be the only available descriptions of the remains of old forts near the Forks, until we come to the investigations made by Judge Howay and Mr. Johnston within the last two years. The object of those investigations was to identify Mackenzie's fort, but Mr. Johnston has furnished the present writer with a description of the remains on the opposite side of Peace river. He states that the traces of the old fort on the northwesterly side are much better defined than in the case of Mackenzie's fort. The ridge of earth along the site of the palisade can readily be seen and encloses a square of about a hundred feet. There are remains of two chimneys, and of two cellars, which would indicate two fairly large buildings, but all trace of the buildings had disappeared before any present resident reached the locality. Mr. Johnston refers also to the remains of a much more recent and small post close to the old fort, a building of which was still standing

fifteen years ago. This last was evidently the post which was occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1875, when Dr. Selwyn visited the place. He describes it as two miles above the mouth of the Smoky and on the left side of Peace river, and in charge of Mr. MacKay. The post was apparently built subsequently to the Deed of surrender of Rupertsland in 1869, as the Company did not then claim any land along Peace river between Fort Vermilion and Dunvegan.

Judge Howay suggests that the older remains on the northwesterly side are those of one of the St. Mary's Houses. There is much to be said for this, yet the local name Fort McLeod forms, in a sense, part of the remains on the ground. That name cannot be altogether ignored in face of the fact that a McLeod was actually prominent in the very locality in the early years. The tradition derives further force because those who have preserved it seem to know nothing about such a person. The less the basis on which a tradition stands in the minds of those who preserve it, the greater the antiquity of its evidence. Even to the present writer's knowledge this tradition goes back many years. He recalls that the late H. B. Round, who had charge of Dunvegan more than forty years ago, told him in 1904 that Dunvegan was so named because the name McLeod had previously been used for the Post at Smoky river. There was a local tradition at least forty years ago that Fort McLeod at the Forks antedated Dunvegan.

During this winter, 1818-19, when Clarke was at one of the St. Mary's Houses near Smoky Forks, the Hudson's Bay Company must have had the greater part of the trade of Peace river. The North West Company brigade was so late in the fall of 1818 that it was stopped by ice near Little Rapids, a few miles above Peace Point. Such a stoppage of trading goods would be disastrous for the winter trade up the river. The brigade according to Archibald McDonald,

was in charge of John George McTavish. He was then senior wintering partner of the North West Company in Athabaska district, and may have intended to winter at Dunvegan where he had been in winter 1808-09. During the intervening years he had crossed the mountains to the mouth of Columbia river and had remained in that region until 1816. This winter would be the first or second in Athabaska after his long absence. He seems generally to have been of a mild disposition, and not have taken much personal part in the rivalry of the Companies. Foiled in his effort to get up Peace river he returned to Fort Chipewyan and was there more or less of a spectator in the contest between his fellow partner Samuel Black and Robertson. Black had but lately been made partner as a reward for his aggressive, or as we would now call it, his outrageous conduct at Ile à la Crosse and Green lake in the previous year. Robertson was arrested by Black in October and kept a prisoner at Chipewyan during the whole of the ensuing winter.⁸⁶ We have no information as to how Clark fared when he brought out what must have been good returns from Smoky Forks in the early summer of 1819, but Robertson was taken east as a prisoner with the North West Company brigade. On reaching Cumberland he escaped, while the brigade went on, only to be stopped at Grand Rapids by a large number of Hudson's Bay Company men in ambush at that strategic point. Among the wintering partners who were captured were J. G. McTavish and William MacIntosh. The tables were now turned, and Robertson went down from Cumberland and joined his friends. MacTavish and MacIntosh were taken towards Norway House, but the latter managed to make himself a raft during the night and so escaped alone. After making his way to a friendly Post he finally returned to Peace river that fall. MacTavish was brought to York Factory, and from there sent to England.



XVII. 1819-1820.

Robertson winters at Smoky Forks — Brings out returns to lake Athabaska in spring 1820 — Franklin — Robertson takes his furs east, but is seized by N. W. Co. at Grand Rapids — Miles runs rapids with despatches — H. B. Co. makes good progress up Peace river — George Simpson — Winter 1820-21 at Chipewyan — Simon McGillivray arrested — Union of Companies — Simpson's abilities — His long journeys — Visits Peace river in fall 1822 — Wintering partners become chief factors and chief traders

Robertson returned that fall 1819 to lake Athabaska, but having had enough of that locality he went up Peace river and, as he says himself, "wintered at a place called St. Mary's." This is the post referred to by Archibald McDonald as "directly facing Clarke's original St. Mary's at the mouth of Smoky river." When spring came he brought his returns to lake Athabaska where he arrived in May 1820 and found Franklin the explorer vainly trying to get provisions for his northern journey from the warring Companies. Although the contest was at its height, Robertson got his brigade safely away in June and followed himself. Franklin tells us that the first of the brigades left the lake on 30th May. He calls John Stuart the senior partner of the North West Company, and says he left on 4th June, while Robertson went off next day and Keith on 9th June. To Robertson the dispatches of Franklin were entrusted, addressed to the Admiralty: They did not get through without some excitement, for when Robertson reached Grand Rapids he found the North West Company in control of the Portage. He says, he gave his important papers to his assistant a young clerk, later chief factor Robert Miles, and he, when Robertson was seized, gallantly ran the rapids and escaped with his important charge. Robertson was taken east, but

when near Montreal he was allowed to escape, his captors fearing complications too great even for them. ⁸⁷

In the fall of this year (1820) the Hudson's Bay Co. had evidently made good progress on Peace river, for they had reached as far as Fort St. John. J. G. MacTavish writes in his circular letter of 22nd April 1821 which was sent to all the wintering partners, "The H. B. Co. are settled near St. Johns and MacIntosh alongside of them." ⁸⁸ This H. B. Co. Post may have been the one called "Mr. Yale's House" which was a very short distance east of modern St. John, or it may have been where Fort St. John stood in 1823—in the northwest angle of the meeting of North Pine (Beatton) and Peace rivers. Matters on Peace river were much more favourable for the Hudson's Bay Company during this winter, which may be largely ascribed to the arrival at Fort Wedderburn of a young man, then twenty two years of age, "a stranger from England, reputed a gentlemanly man, but not formidable as an Indian trader." Never was a greater mistake made in reading character than in this remark by F. W. Wentzel, for the new comer was none other than the future governor, George Simpson.

We get a brief account of some of the events at lake Athabaska from the circular letter to which reference has just been made. In this letter MacTavish summarises a report dated 24 October 1820 from George Keith. Keith, who was the wintering partner in charge, refers to news of "a most distressing nature, the capture of Mr. Simon McGillivray by the H. B. people at Fort Wedderburn the day before the letter. Mr. Simpson, who is at the head of H. B. affairs in Athab., being present, Mr. Keith was answered that Mr. McG. was arrested by a regular constable from Lower Canada, and that the H. B. servants were called upon to assist him in the execution of his duty, when they necessarily complied. It would appear that the H. B. are determined to

endeavour to carry out Mr. McG. a prisoner. Mr. K. recommends to the agents the absolute necessity of forwarding 7 or 8 canoes of pork eaters (to remain as) winterers. From the same circular letter we learn that Samuel Black, who so often in the past had been able to enforce his own ideas, was now summoned from New Caledonia. James Leith, then in charge of Dunvegan, reported in January 1821 that Black had left there on 23rd November for lake Athabaska, and there was a general expectation that it would not be long before he would effect the release of McGillivray. But they were to learn that the young stranger from England was not only a formidable Indian trader, but equally formidable even in contest with so experienced a dictator as Samuel Black. We have no details of what occurred when the meeting took place, but it marked the end of Black's reign.

Simon McGillivray, whose arrest had brought matters to a climax, was a son of the great William McGillivray, and grand-nephew of the equally great Simon McTavish, known as the marquis. Simon was then about thirty years old. He became chief trader at the Union, and remained in the service, with a short interruption, until nearly twenty years later, much of the time being spent in Labrador. Simpson, many years after the troubles at lake Athabaska, complimented him on his "superior activity, address and good management," but the latter part of his life was unhappy. He died in 1840 when, past fifty years of age, he was on his way to Mackenzie river district to which, for some reason, he had been transferred from Labrador.

The years of contest were now nearly over. The great union occurred in December 1821, and soon Simpson was firmly placed as governor. It must always be a matter for wonder how the Hudson's Bay Company came to select a young man of whom at the time they can have known but little yet who was so well fitted for his most difficult task.

We need only peruse such of Simpson's letters as are now available to us to realize his abilities. He was young, energetic and enthusiastic in the work before him, a consummate judge of human nature, with the tact and courage to deal with a set of officers who were not only themselves much above the average in courage and firmness of character, but who were, in many cases, bitterly antagonistic to the union. "With these men," Simpson wrote some two years after he had become governor, "I find nothing does so well in the long run as candour and plain dealing, and finesse should never be resorted to, except in extraordinary cases." And again, "The example I show them of a total disregard to personal ease and comfort does much good. They are no longer the suspicious, dissatisfied men they have been." ⁸⁹ Whether, balancing all aspects, it would not have been better had Simpson retired about 1850, after some thirty years service, may well be considered, but taking into account only the first thirty years of his career it would have been difficult indeed to have found a more suitable governor.

In his earlier years Simpson kept control over the wintering partners, now called chief factors and chief traders, by personal contact gained by long and frequent journeys through the West. His first journey was in winter 1821-22 at which time he passed over much of what is now Manitoba. He has reported to Colville in May 1822; "This journey introduced me to the acquaintance of some of our fresh allies, who received me with politeness and attention." The tact indicated by this remark needs no comment. On 5th September of the same year he writes again: "I am proceeding in the course of a few days for the interior, around by Athabaska, Peace river, Lesser Slave lake and the upper Posts of the Saskatchewan. The object of this immense journey is, if possible, to check abuses which nothing but my own presence can stop, and to get rid of several establishments, which are a heavy burden." This journey was under-

taken, but at present we have little account of it. Simpson went as far as Great Slave lake, returned up Peace river, and then came out southeasterly by way of Lesser Slave lake and Edmonton.⁹⁰

The Union naturally caused much difficulty in regard to the future of many of the former wintering partners. Only one establishment was now retained where previously there had generally been two. Many of the senior partners had been practically assured of their positions by the terms of the union. To that extent the North West Company had been able to enforce its wishes. Of those who had been wintering partners in the service of the Company on Peace river, five became chief factor — John Thomson who retired next year, John Stuart who remained in the service of the united Companies for eighteen years, J. G. MacTavish, James Leith and George Keith. William MacIntosh, although only chief trader at the union, was promoted chief factor within two years. Four others became chief traders at the union — Harmon, Simon McGillivray, Alexander Roderick McLeod, and Thomas McMurray. Harmon drew his full share until 1827, and then drops out altogether, unlike the usual case of drawing a half share for four years after retirement. The last record of his actual service which we have states that he was in charge of Lac la Pluie in April 1821, and three months later Nicholas Garry lists him among the new chief traders who then signed the Covenant at Fort William.⁹¹ A. R. McLeod became chief factor in 1836 as a reward for his work with Captain Back. McMurray retired in 1843 without attaining the higher rank. Colin Campbell did not receive his commission as chief trader until 1828, and was still in service, in charge of Fort Chipewyan, as late as 1843.

Particularly difficult were the cases of those more junior wintering partners who had taken an aggressive part against the Hudson's Bay Company, of which the most outstanding

was that of Samuel Black. Although one of the most prominent of the junior partners, his actions had been so notorious that the London Committee would not grant him any commission at the union, not even as chief trader. Linked with his case was that of P. S. Ogden, the companion in many of his raids. Simpson handled their case with great skill. First he let it become evident that their former partners, now chief factors, could do nothing for them. But as Black was a great favourite with them, Simpson recognized the danger of allowing Black's failure to rankle in the minds of those whom he was anxious to conciliate, and he saw the advantage of training the new officers to have confidence in his power to redress a grievance.

While matters were in this transition stage, Simpson used all his powers of persuasion with the London forces, and in March 1823 Colville wrote to him that the Committee had been impressed by his advocacy, and had recommended that both Black and Ogden should receive a commission as chief trader. To this communication Simpson replied, "The admission of Black and Ogden has given great satisfaction, and I feel flattered that so much attention has been paid to my recommendation. They will be worthy of the indulgence. Black could at first hardly look me in the face. He remembered my Athabasca campaign, and never will he forget the terrors in which he was kept that winter. We parted excellent friends, and I have started him on an expedition which excites some interest, and will be no sinecure, to explore the country on the west side of the mountains, north from Babine lake." 92

Simpson's reference is to the exploration of Finlay river which was undertaken by Black in the following year (1824), and his remarks throw some light on the selection of Black. He was not particularly fitted for such work owing to lack of experience in astronomical observing, but we may

take it that Simpson was partly influenced by a desire to conciliate many of the former Nor'westers by showing a special favour to one who was so popular with them.

Led by a firm and tactful governor, anxious to forget the past and to advance merit wherever found, it was not long before time applied its healing effect, and all the officers, regardless of their own rivalry in former years, gradually took their places as fellow workers.

REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Stiles' map is reproduced, Davidson, "North West Company," 42
2. Pond's map is reproduced in Rept. Canadian Archives, 1890.
3. Turnor's map is reproduced, Burpee: "Western Sea," p. 170.
4. Mackenzie, "Voyages," London, 1801, 146.
5. Masson, "Bourgeois," vol. I, 21
6. Ibid, 24.
7. Canadian Archives, Masson Collection, M.414.
8. Ibid.
9. Masson, "Bourgeois," vol. I, 30.
10. Masson Collection, M.414.
11. Mackenzie, "Voyages," London, 1801, 129.
12. See page 40.
13. The site of this fort, where Mackenzie wintered, has been actually identified on the ground by Judge F. W. Howay, and is described in his Article, Proceedings, Royal Society of Canada, 1928, II, pp. 165-175.
14. Simpson to Colville, May 1822. Selkirk Papers, 7, 588.
15. Masson Collection, M.414, page 270.
16. The original journal is in Canadian Archives, Masson Papers, vol. IV. It has been published verbatim in Washington Historical Quarterly, Oct. 1928, edited by Marion O'Neil. The editing is of a general character only, and errs in the location of the fort.
17. Masson Collection, M. 414, page 279.
18. Ibid. Letter No. 34, July 1796, and Letter No. 49, April, 1794.
19. See "The Explorer of Finlay River in 1824," by J. N. Wallace, in Canadian Historical Review, March 1928.
20. The Librarian, Bancroft Library, University of California, has identified the real source of Bancroft's quotation.
21. Thomson's Journal (original) is in Canadian Archives, Masson Papers, vol. IV.
22. McGillivray's journal (which is very short), Masson Papers, vol. III.
23. Masson, "Bourgeois," vol. II, 386.

24. G. H. Blanchet, F.R.G.S., who has an intimate knowledge of lake Athabaska, points out that James MacKenzie's topographical remarks show that he was writing at the present site of Fort Chipewyan.
25. Masson, "Bourgeois," II, 390.
26. Ibid., 392.
27. "R. R. Potties," probably means the rivals who were trading near Red River or Grand Marais post (wherever it may have been), and does not refer to the actual Red river. The abbreviation "R. R. or G. M." is common in this journal.
28. Malcolm McLeod, "Peace River," 28 August 1828.
29. The items about Laffeur (A) and (B) were kindly supplied by Mr. W. C. King, retired chief trader, who re-opened Fort St. John in 1874.
30. Porter's journal (original) is in Canadian Archives, Masson Papers, vol. IV.
31. Davidson, "North West Company," 280.
- 32 and 33. (These numbers not used).
34. Thompson's Journals, referred to by J. B. Tyrrell.
35. Petitot: "Grand Lac des Ours," p. 69.
36. Canadian Archives, C. 363, page 105a.
37. J. B. Tyrrell. Trans. Roy. Soc. Can. 1913, section II, p. 124.
38. Masson, "Bourgeois," I. 32.
39. McGillivray's journal, Masson Papers, vol. III.
40. Coues; Henry-Thompson Journals, 897.
41. Masson Collection, M. 414, page 270.
42. Stuart's journal in Canadian Archives, M. 731. C. See also Bancroft N. W. Coast, II. page 90.
43. R. C. McLeod: "The Macleods of Dunvegan," (Edinburgh, 1927).
44. Calgary was named in 1876 by Col. J. F. Macleod, Commissioner, North West Mounted Police, who was born in the island of Skye, not far from Dunvegan. The name Calgary is after the estate of his cousin, Mackenzie, in the island of Mull.
45. Bryce: "History of the Hudson's Bay Co." page 386.
46. Coues. "Henry-Thompson Journals," 277.

47. See Morice, "Northern Interior of British Columbia," 60.
48. Malcolm McLeod: "Peace River," 31 August 1828.
49. Memorial of N. W. Co., to Privy Council, quoted by Davidson, "North-West Company," 292.
50. Daniel MacKenzie to Selkirk, Sept. 1816. Selkirk Paper, 2,685
51. The short extracts from Harmon are from the Toronto edition, 1904, except where stated to be from the Harmon MS. in Canadian Archives.
52. Harmon MS.
53. (not used).
54. Moberly and Cameron: "When Fur was King," page 138.
55. Harmon MS.
56. Canadian Archives, Répt. 1928, 65.
57. Ross Cox: "Columbia River," (N.Y. 1832), 193.
58. McGillivray letter, Selkirk Papers, 9, 172. Harmon, 191.
59. Irving: "Officers of 1812". Statement respecting Selkirk's Settlement, (London, 1817), page 154. Selkirk: "Sketch of the Fur Trade."
60. Selkirk Papers, 8, 837. The brother was Robert Henry, later a partner.
61. McGillivray letter, Selkirk Papers, 9, 105. McGillis letter, Ibid., 9, 093.
62. Clarke to Selkirk, 10 Aug. 1816, Selkirk Papers, 2, 499.
63. Letters of James Anderson (A). Canadian Archives. Fort Norman, in 1853, was at Old Fort Point, 33 miles above its present site.
64. To such an extent was this route abandoned that Mair states people at Lesser Slave lake doubted a very old woman who, in 1899, said she remembered its being used. "Through the MacKenzie Basin," 144.
65. Clarke to Selkirk.
66. Selkirk Papers. 9, 130.
67. (Not used).
68. Fraser to Stuart, Feb. 1807, quoted by Scholefield, "British Columbia," p. 259.
69. Selkirk Papers, 15, 675.
70. Clarke to Selkirk, S.P. 2, 505.
71. Selkirk Paper, 8, 760.

72. Colin Campbell, Selkirk Papers, 8,765. Malcolm McLeod, "Peace River," 15 August, 1828.
73. Clarke to Selkirk, S.P. 2,506. 74. Ross Cox, "Columbia River." 287.
75. Selkirk Papers, 2,593.
76. James Bird, at Norway House, to Selkirk, Apt. 1816. Selkirk Papers, 2,532.
77. Keith letter, Selkirk Papers, 8,794. McGillivray letter, Ibid., 9,135.
78. Hughes letter, S.P., 8,791. Q. Series, vol. 151, part 2, p. 425.
79. Q. Series, vol. 151, part 2, p. 428.
80. Ross Cox, "Columbia River," 283.
81. Selkirk Papers, 16,036, 82. Ibid., 9,172
83. Malcolm McLeod, "Peace River," has a comma between the words *Robertson's* and *St. Mary's* which should be deleted. Riviere le C. is Heart river, now called Harmon river.
84. See note No. 13.
85. Mair, "Through the Mackenzie Basin," p. 87. Cameron, "The New North," p. 352.
86. For an outline of Black's career, see "The Explorer of Finlay river in 1824," by J. N. Wallace. Canadian Historical Review, March 1928.
87. Robertson's affidavit. S.P., 16,036. Franklin, First Journey, 4to. ed. p. 150.
88. Davidson, "North West Company," p. 303.
89. Simpson to Colvile, Sept. and June, 1823. S.P., 8,033 and 7,923.
90. Simpson to Colvile, June 1823. S.P., 7,924
91. Davidson, "North West Company," p. 304. Proceedings Roy. Soc. Can., 1900, section 11, p. 178.
92. Selkirk Papers, 8,036.

THE DUNVEGAN JOURNAL

18th April to 14th October 1806.

*To Dunvegan we came, very willing to be at rest, and found
our fatigue amply recompensed by our reception.*

At Dunvegan I had tasted lotus, and was in danger of forgetting that I was ever to depart.

Johnson: The Western Islands (1773)

The following extracts are taken from a copy of the original "Journal of the Daily Transactions at Dunvegan," which copy occurs in the Canadian Archives, Selkirk Papers, pages 8,958 to 9,002. At the end there is the following note made by Selkirk — "This Journal was found by me at Fort William in the month of August 1816, in a room which had recently been occupied by Mr. Archibald Norman McLeod, and in a trunk containing books of accounts, and various books and papers relative to the trade of Athabasca about the same date, from which it appears that a large department of the North West Company was, at that time, under the charge of the said McLeod. Selkirk."

As the journal covers a period of 180 days, and the copy, written in a fine hand, occupies 44 pages of foolscap, it will be seen the entries average a quarter of a page for each day. The name of the writer of the journal is not disclosed but there can be little doubt that he was Alexander Roderick McLeod. On 12th May, when the brigade left for Fort William, we have the entry, "we are now remaining at the fort, six men, eight women, and seven children. The six men can readily be identified from the entries for the days immediately succeeding. They are Goedike, who was a senior clerk. Baptiste Lafleur, interpreter; Cadotte, hunter; Trudelle, carpenter, Landrie, general helper; and "ourselves." Later other people came and went, Goedike was absent for many short periods, and on 4th September he left for Fort Vermilion, and did not return until 12th October. The only other clerk, in addition to A. R. McLeod, who was at Dunvegan during this summer, was David Holmes, and he is mentioned in such a way as to preclude his being the writer, as, for example, in the entry for 21 April. The word "I" never occurs and the word "me" only once, on 1st October, at which date Goedike was absent. On 21 August we read "Mr. F. Goedike, A. R.

McLeod, David Holmes and Baptiste set off on a hunting expedition." And on 23 August we have, "This morning we arrived from our hunting expedition. We missed several shots at buffalo." Evidently the writer was one of the four named, and there are objections to all except A. R. McLeod.

The mode of expression is that of a well-educated man, and if, as seems to be the case, the copy in the Archives follows the original spelling, this also indicates good education. It appears as though the journal were intended to be a fort record, not an account of the writer's own activities. His personality is kept much in the background, yet we can see, from the entry on 7th August, that he was well able to control the Indians, when, against their wishes, they were made to surrender their weapons, although outnumbering his own small party by four or five to one.

1806

Friday, 18 April. This morning four men went on foot and brought gum, enough to make a keg of it. Two more men brought wattap, to make nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ bunch. The Smith and Ant. Foncier put fire to the coal pit and watched it, and worked at the forge at the same time. Beauchemin and Pasquette are still working at the block-houses. Four men worked at the fort ditch in order to make it thaw. Forcier sharpened fort pickets. Maillaux and Bideau knoth'd the fort pickets, and fixed them in the rails. Blondin with 14 or 15 men worked at the canoes. Seven men that went yesterday for hay arrived, and brought each a good load. Two men with the horses hauled fort pickets across the river.

Saturday, 19 April. Seven men worked at the fort ditch. Maillaux and those that worked with him were employed as yesterday, so were Trudelle, Beauchemin and Pasquette. Blondin and several of the men working at the canoes, of which nine are sewed, so that they have but two more to make. Mr. McGillivray, with two Indians, arrived from the Petit Querelleurs Band who are two days march from here. Those Indians have plenty of provisions, but very little beaver.

Monday, 21 April. David Holmes with an Indian arrived from L'Homme Seule's Band. David says the Indians wish five sledges were sent to them to bring their provisions to the fort. Three of the men that went to the R. Mountain arrived with letters from here. This is the eighth day since they came off. Desmarais and L.

Cadien, who went with them to the R. Mountain, are gone after some Indians whose road Mr. Stuart saw (when) going up (the river), and (he) ordered them to follow it. Four men were sent for gum, two went for wattap, and brought wherewith to make two bunches. Seven men worked at the ditch, four others prepared pickets to be put up. ~~Trudelle worked at the boat. Beauchemin and Pasquette~~ worked at the block-houses. Blondin with some of the men put timber in the canoes. Tousignant and Marcellais have finished hauling timber with the horses. This evening the men carried each four fort pickets up the hill.

Tuesday, 22 April. Early this morning Malataire and five men were sent to L'Homme Seule's for the provisions. Mr. McGillivray and Gosselin set off for R. Mountain Portage where the former is to pass the summer.

Wednesday, 23 April. Desmarais and Cadien arrived. This is the twelfth day since they left the R. M. Portage. They met Mr. McGillivray this morning a little below the two D. P. Islands. Those two men have been after the Indians, whose road they saw (when) going up (the river), but after they had walked two days, they could not follow it any more. The Indians that they were sent after is the Little Head's father-in-law, a set of good for nothing fellows. Two men went for gum and two more went for wattap, two others made gum, two more cut small pickets for the fort, two more made pins. (A dozen other men employed)

Thursday, 24 April. Four men cut small pickets for the fort, four more made pins, two others brought wattap, two men sawed wood for the floorings of the block houses and bastions. Maillaux and three men worked at the fort pickets, seven men worked at the fort ditch. This morning Mr. McLeod got a quarreling with Foret. The consequence was that Foret got a kicking and a blow with a stick, which knocked him down senseless, but he soon recovered of the blow he got, and walked about. Some meat was put out yesterday to dry and Nasplette watched it for some would take it. The only one known to be guilty is Martineau, whom Mr. McLeod spoke to, and in order to punish him he took his wife and gave her to M. Cadieu, who is more able to maintain her, Martineau being much in debt.

Saturday, 26 April. Blondin with several men made canoes. Four men carried small pickets, four others made pins for the fort, four men knothed fort pickets and fixed them to the rails, and four

more sharpened pickets and made mortoises in the poteaus. Four others were sent for wattap. The two Pauls sawed wood for the floorings of the bastions and block houses.

Monday, 28 April. The Owl War Chief and their bands arrived. With those Indians came le Mari-des-deux-jolies-femmes who has been, since last spring, with the Slave Indians, of whom there were twelve lodges. He attempted to make us believe a number of stories by telling us there was a fort near the sea, inhabited by people quite different from us in many respects. In order to prove that, he brought us a dag which he said those people made but, unfortunately for him, it was known to be the work of some Indian, or perhaps his own. He was severely reprimanded for telling such lies, and much laughed at by the Indians who were present. Twelve men began to put up the fort pickets, three others cut small pickets for the fort, and four others carried them.

Tuesday, 29 April. Blondin finished the canoes, of which ten are made and the eleventh is sewed. The Indians drank until 2 p.m. when the drinking match was stopped. About five o'clock the ice broke up, and drifted in the river.

Wednesday, 30 April. There are now eleven canoes finished, which is the number required. Twelve men were busy putting up the fort pickets, and five others carried them to where they were to be put up. Three men cut small pickets. Beauchemin put up one of the block houses. (Eight other men employed in building the fort). There is a great deal of ice drifting in the river.

Thursday, 1 May. The Indians traded all day, and in the evening they went off, everyone of them. The men were employed as yesterday, except a few who took out some of the pickets that were put up last fall. Beauchemin put up the poteaus of the block house. Marcellais, who promised to hire this winter, was asked to sign his agreement. He said he never intended to hire for three years, nor that he ever promised to hire. He disputed for some time with Mr. McLeod, and contradicted him. At that Mr. McLeod got vexed, and gave him a few blows. After that he asked him if he preferred signing or, as a rascal as he is, to be clapped in irons. He accepted of the latter and immediately was fettered. Mr. McLeod asked him a second time if he would sign. He answered that he would sooner suffer any punishment than sign. His hands were tied with a cord behind his back, which hurt him so much

that he instantly asked to sign. His demand being complied with, his hands were untied, but he remained in irons for the night.

Friday, 2 May. T. Pasquette and Plaute were sent in a small canoe to the Forks in order to repair the fort and make a garden. In the evening the Indians returned to their lodges. Mr. McLeod sent Baptiste to tell them if they were there tomorrow, he would go and send them off. Forty two bags of pemican are made. The men have finished putting up the fort pickets.

Saturday, 3 May. This morning Samson and Malitaire set off with 4 men for Fort Vermilion in a large canoe loaded with dried meat and pemican, and 170 lbs. of white earth.

Sunday, 4 May. Bales of dried meat were made of 87 lbs. weight. The women smoked 35 dressed skins to make covering for the fine beaver.

Monday, 5 May. Ten men were employed cleaning around the fort and inside of it. Beauchemin was busy putting up the block house.

Tuesday, 6 May. This morning the children went to gather a kind of root called des Quenes de Rat. In place of that they brought a great quantity of hemlock of which several of the men ate of it, and especially Tousignant and La Vallet. The latter ate such a quantity of it that he soon was sick, and went to the block-house to sleep he was no sooner (arrived) than he fell down, senseless. In that situation he remained for some time. When Mr. McLeod was informed of this, he immediately gave him an emetic, but it had no effect, he being at the time senseless. He remained in that dreadful condition till 4 p.m., when he expired. Tousignant and several of the children were near sharing the same fate, but luckily for them that they got each an emetic, which had the desired effect.

Wed., 7 May. This morning the young man that died was buried, and his grave was surrounded with pickets. This evening Martineau was called into the Hall, and Mr. McLeod spoke to him about his having told Baptiste La Fleur that he intended to desert to go to the R. Mountain. Mr. McLeod reprimanded him for speaking so foolishly as he generally does, and explained to him what would happen to him was he to desert.

Thursday, 8 May. Cadotte and Baptiste were sent to look for the Indians. They returned in the evening, after having been as far

as the Big Meadow. They saw none of their vistages of late. In the evening the men had a ball, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ gallons of rum was given to them in drams.

Friday, 9 May. The men were busy preparing to be off tomorrow.

Saturday, 10 May. This morning the men set off. Blondin, with six canoes, is to go to Kaministiquia, and three others to lac la Pluie. Mr. McLeod remains here, expecting the Rocky Mountain people. In the afternoon we began to take an inventory of everything remaining here.

Sunday, 11 May. Continued our inventory. The men of Mr. McLeod's canoe began to drink this evening, and danced until 10 o'clock.

Monday, 12 May. Early this morning we finished the inventory and, after breakfast, Mr. McLeod bade us farewell for the summer and embarked in a light canoe with eight men. We are now remaining at the fort six men, eight women and seven children, so that if we are few men, the women and children can make up the deficiency.

Tuesday, 13 May. We put the store and shop in order, and began to hoe the garden.

Wednesday, 14 May. Cadotte, Baptiste and ourselves hoed part of the ground in the garden.

Thursday, 15 May. F. Goedike made a hot bed in which cabbage seeds are to be sowed.

Friday, 16 May. J. Hoole arrived from The Forks where he left old Pasquette making a garden. He was near starving to death. This evening Cadotte had a few high words with his wife and she, being displeased at him, went out in a passion, and chanced to find some of the same kind of roots which poisoned La Valle on the 6th inst.. She ate some in order to put an end to her life but happily that exacreble (sic) root had dried, and lost some of its efficacy. She is now out of danger.

Saturday, 17 May. We cut up two kegs of potatoes to plant them. F. Goedike sowed some cabbage seeds in the hot-bed. Mr. McKenvin with two men and a Slave Indian arrived from the Rocky Mountain. They brought letters, but none for us. They

tell us that there is a great deal of ice at the Rocky Mountain, and that the river was only clear of ice on the 13th inst.

Monday, 19 May. Old Pasquette arrived from the Forks where he sowed several kinds of seeds, and planted three kegs of potatoes. — Beisson and the Slave went off about ten o'clock. Nothing was sent to the Rocky Mountain. We planted one keg of potatoes.

Wednesday, 21 May. Baptiste Lafleur went a hunting. F. Goedike and Landrie sowed barley.

Thursday, 22 May. Five men arrived in a large canoe from the Rocky Mountain, loaded with 28 pieces. Mr. McKenvin embarked with them, and about an hour after they arrived, they bade us adieu. Sowed peas and radish.

Friday, 23 May. Trudelle worked at the roof of the porch.

Saturday, 24 May. Planted $\frac{1}{2}$ keg of potatoes. Baptiste and Goedike were sowing onions, carot, lattuce, radish, parsley and parsnip seeds.

Monday, 26 May. Goedike has sowed several kinds of seeds.

Tuesday, 27 May. Finished the Powder house, and put the powder in it.

Wednesday, 28 May. As there was appearance of calm weather we set fire to the chips that are about the fort, and to prevent any accidents watched the fire the whole day. About 1 p.m. we perceived the bastion in the northeast corner of the fort was in a blaze. We all ran immediately to save it but, with all our endeavours, we could not prevent it from being burnt to ashes, with a few fort pickets, in less than half an hour. Luckily the wind did not blow, for the fort would have been in danger of sharing the same fate. We sat up till 12 p.m. and then went to rest, except three men who sat up all night.

Thursday, 29 May. The men went to try and hinder the fire from getting into the wood, where there was a hundred cords of fire-wood cut this spring for next winter. After having worked until 3 p.m. we all came to the fort, having taken the greatest pains to save the wood. We followed the fire over the hills, our intention being to leave it burn until the little river above the fort, where it would have stopped. We were near the place, in a small creek with much dried brush which we cleared, when a sudden blast of

wind kindled everything for a moment and rendered useless the pains we had taken since morning. We came back, the fire following us, and as soon as we were in the fort, two men with the women were set carrying water, while six others sprinkled the roof of all the houses, for we were almost smothered with sparks and smoke. However at sunset the wind cleared. At 11.30 p.m. as the fort was out of danger we layed down. Some of the men were going about the fort all night, for fear of being surprised again.

Friday, 30 May. Of the 105 cords of wood there is only 36 remaining. Peas and radishes have made their appearance.

Saturday, 31 May. La Rammer and Paquette worked at the fort pickets replacing those that were burnt, and putting others in place of the bastion. Cadotte, Hoole and Baptiste Lafleur are gone to look after the horses this evening.

Sunday, 1 June. We see no more fire in the plains, therefore we think it extinct.

Monday, 2 June. Cadotte and others returned. They went as far as la Rivière Brulé, but could not find the horses.

Wednesday, 4 June. Trudelle began to plane boards for Mr. McLeod room. Cadotte and Baptiste went to look for the horses.

Thursday, 5 June. The potatoes that were planted on the 19th begin to appear.

Friday, 6 June. Cadotte and the others arrived and brought the horses, which they found at Lac des Femmes. E. Goedike sowed some turnip seed.

Monday, 9 June. Cadotte, Baptiste, LaFleur and Goedike set off on a hunting expedition.

Tuesday, 10 June. Landrie put the ice house in order. The fire is still in the plains.

Thursday, 12 June. Baptiste, Lafleur and Goedike arrived from Cadotte's with three horses loaded with meat.

Friday, 13 June. Trudelle went across the river and brought six beams for Mr. McLeod's room and the Hall.

Sunday, 15 June. La Rammer and Pasquette were told to go to la Monte Decorce, and rise what bark they find there.

Wednesday, 18 June. Trudelle planing boards for Mr. McLeod's room. Landrie was washing for us, and then fixed wedges in the walls.

Saturday, 21 June. Desottelai with six other young men arrived from L'Homme Seul and band. They are 12 lodges in all, and several of the men and children are sick, and for that reason they did nothing since spring. Those young men brought for the value of 30 skins in furs and dressed skins to trade for tobacco and ammunition. We allowed them to trade 13 skins, and the remainder we took for their debts. Baptiste arrived from Cadotte's. They say Cadotte can't kill, although he gives himself a great deal of trouble, but the animals are so scarce that he can't kill any.

Sunday, 22 June. F. Goedike and Baptiste left for Cadotte's. La Rammer arrived. They rose 2,000 barks at the Monte Decorce and this side of it. Desottelai and the others are gone off.

Monday, 23 June. La Rammer went to the other side of the river and rose 100 barks. The water is too high to hazard bringing down the barks they rose above.

Tuesday, 24 June. This evening F. Goedike arrived and brought a horse load of bear's meat which is very poor.

Wednesday, 25 June. Pasquette and La Rammer went to the other side of the river, and put the barks they rose in heaps. There is now in all 2,600 barks.

Friday, 27 June. F. Goedike and La Rammer set off to go to the Forks, to hoe the potatoes and put the garden in order.

Thursday, 3 July. F. Goedike and La Rammer arrived from the Forks. They came up by land and, notwithstanding, having a great deal of trouble and misery, and in addition to that their being three days without eating.

Saturday, 5 July. D. Holmes with his family arrived from Fort Vermilion. They came to raise bark. This is their 20th day since they left Fort Vermilion. They brought us two letters, one from Mr. McLeod and the other from Mr. McIntosh. There being no meat at the fort therefore the work was stopped. We made a meal with 25 lbs Pemican.

Sunday, 6 July. This is the first day this year that we went without eating, and of course no work is done. Cadotte must be starving like ourselves. Otherwise we would have heard from him

Monday, 7 July. No news yet from Cadotte. Trudelle gone hunting. We must go to bed supperless.

Tuesday, 8 July. This evening a dog was killed which is to be paid between F. Goedike, David Holmes, Cardinal Trudelle, and Landrie.

Wednesday, 9 July. The men all hunting or fishing, but very unlucky. We are now in a very alarming situation, not having a mouthful to eat. The children are always going about the fort crying for something to eat. Landrie killed a dog.

Thursday, 10 July. Trudelle and Pasquette went on the other side, and found a small band of Indians, from whom they got a little meat and brought it to the fort, and all hands made a meal.

Friday, 11 July. Holmes went to the Indians and brought 13 skins (worth) of meat.

Saturday, 12 July. Baptiste arrived from Cadottes. They have starved as well as ourselves. Baptiste brought nothing. (Two of the women at the fort asked for a canoe to cross the river, and as soon as they had crossed and were no longer watched, they went down the river. A man was sent after them and brought them back, from the Burnt Island).

Monday, 14 July. Ten women from the Flux band arrived loaded with meat. They brought 1,182 lbs. dried meat, 721 lbs. pounded, and 170 lbs. grease.

Tuesday, 15 July. Three young men arrived from the R. Mountain Indians who are three days journey up the river, and God knows when they will come to the fort. Cadotte arrived, half dead with starvation and vexation.

Tuesday, 22 July. Cadotte, A. R. McLeod, and Baptiste set out this evening to go hunting. David Holmes is gone to the hunter's.

Friday, 25 July. A. R. McLeod and Baptiste went off to the Big Meadow in search of the white horse.

Saturday, 26 July. A. R. McLeod and Baptiste returned this morning, unsuccessful.

Sunday, 27 July. Cadotte and family set off to go to the Forks for berries.

Monday, 28 July. Men gone to Monte d'Ecorce to get bark. D. Holmes set out for the Forks to hoe the potatoes and weed the garden, and to return with Cadotte.

Tuesday, 29 July. Bark was brought in a boat. The men were employed till dusk carrying the bark up the hill.

Thursday, 7 Aug. The Flux War Chief and Seute (Suite), consisting of 22 men in all, arrived. They brought 39 skins in fur, and 283 skins in provisions. The Little Head arrived, and brought 8 skins beaver, and 44 in provisions. All their furs were taken for debt. The Indians drank all night very quietly, all their arms being in the store. They were obliged to submit to what we proposed to them, but not without appearing displeased.

Friday, 8 Aug. Cadotte and D. Holmes arrived from the Forks, and brought much berries. It froze so hard that peas, barley and potatoes were destroyed.

Wednesday, 13 Aug. F. Goedike and La Rammer had a quarrel. The latter got an Irishman's coat of arms.

Thursday, 14 Aug. Saw a bear on the opposite side of the river. A. R. McLeod and Baptiste went and killed it.

Sunday, 17 Aug. P. Coupé, with a few others, arrived. They have made a poor hunt.

Tuesday, 19 Aug. La Malice arrived from the Rocky Mountains. He is to go to the lake. He informed us that Mr. Fraser and Mr. Stuart with their people, whom he left the 7th inst., are at the Carrier's lake, building. They arrived there the 26th ultimo. He came afoot part of the way with an Indian, and came down the river alone in a small canoe.

Thursday, 21 Aug. Early this morning La Malice set off for Fort Chipewyan. He got 261 lbs dried meat to go to Fort Vermilion where he will get more provisions. Mr. F. Goedike, A. R. McLeod, David Holmes and Baptiste set off on a hunting expedition to Lac des Femmes.

Saturday, 23 Aug. This morning we arrived from our hunting expedition. We missed several shots at buffalo, and were obliged to return light.

Thursday, 4 Sept. F. Goedike and David Holmes set off for Fort Chipewyan in the boat.

Sunday, 7 Sept. A. R. McLeod and Baptiste are gone to Lac des Femmes to kill buffalo.

Thursday, 11 Sept. As the shop, store, and ice house lean to one side, the men were employed all day to set them up perpendicular.

Saturday, 13 Sept. Collas employed all day plastering the G. Maison (the Big House).

Thursday, 18 Sept. We settled with L'Homme Seul and band, and they set off. They are to be on the borders of the river, opposite to la Rivière d'Épinette on the 20th October, at which place they asked to have a fort this fall.

Sunday, 21 Sept. We settled with The Little Girl and band. They are to be back the 5th of next month. The Fer-à-Cheval Indians were also settled, and they set off. They are to be on the borders of the river near Mr. McLeod's old Fort on 15th October.

Monday, 22 Sept. Finished the kitchen chimney.

Wednesday, 24 Sept. Whitewashed the Hall and Mr. McLeod's room.

Wednesday, 1 Oct. Trudelle put windows in the G. Maison. Landrie washed for me.

Friday, 3 Oct. La Malice arrived.

Thursday, 9 Oct. La Rammer and an Indian were sent to the Forks to put the turnips and potatoes in security.

Friday, 10 Oct. La Fleur and family arrived from Fort Vermilion. His errand is not known. He says that he came here in order to pay a visit to his son.

Saturday, 11 Oct. About 8 a.m. Mr. McLeod arrived in a light canoe with nine men. This is their sixth day from Fort Vermilion, and the fourteenth day from Fort Chipewyan. As soon as Mr. McLeod had arrived the Indians came into the Hall, and the Little Girl got one foot of tobacco and was told to go to his lodge, he and all the others, and when they would be wanted they would be sent for.

Sunday, 12 Oct. This evening after dusk Blondin with a brigade of seven canoes, 18 pieces and five men per canoe, arrived. This is their eighth day from Fort Vermilion. Mr. A. MacKenzie in a loaded canoe accompanied Blondin which made the seventh canoe. About two hours after their arrival, Mr. F. Goedike arrived in a loaded canoe with 6 men. He set off from Fort Vermilion accompanied by seven men in another loaded canoe, whom he left at Fer-à-Cheval three days ago, as they were not able to follow him. They will probably be here the day after tomorrow.

Monday, 13 Oct. The Indians drank all night. The married men were given 15 to 20 skins on credit. The young men 10 to 15 skins. All hands making an equipment for the R. M. Portage and beyond.

Tuesday, 14 Oct. The remainder of the Indians was settled, and they all set off, and appeared to be very well pleased, as half their credits were given to them to encourage them to work well. Three Iroquois, who were formerly at Slave lake, arrived. They brought 43 skins in beaver.

NOTES TO THE JOURNAL.

April 18. Gum; Obtained from the spruce, for covering the joints in birch bark canoes. Wattap; The long fine root of the spruce, used to lace the pieces of bark together. Blondin; Captain of the brigade. Coal; There is a six-inch seam of lignite at Dunvegan, on the north side of Peace river.

April 21. —David Holmes; Interpreter, probably son of the early trader. It was the practice that such sons should enter the service as interpreters, before being appointed clerks. "The R. Mountain" seems to mean Rocky Mountain Portage.

April 22. Archibald McGillivray; A clerk. See Morice: Northern B.C. page 58. D.P. Islands; Possibly Des Prairies Islands.

April 24. Archibald Norman McLeod; Wintering partner, then in charge of the Peace river district.

April 28. The copy has Slave, but Sikanni Indians would be easier to understand.

April 29. The average date of break up of ice in river at Dunvegan is April 22.

May 2. Baptiste Lafleur, interpreter. See page 53.

May 6. The plant which the children were sent to find "was probably yamp or Squaw root (*Carium Gairdneri*). This is still eaten by the Indians, has spindle shaped clustered roots, and occurs in Alberta. It belongs to the same botanical family as the hemlock." J. Adams, Botanist, Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

May 8. The Big Meadow.

May 14. "Ourselves" seems to refer to the two clerks, A. R. McLeod and Fred Goedike.

May 17. McKenvin; This name also occurs in the copy of John Stuart's journal, but it seems to be a copyist's error for McKenzie. The person here referred to may be Alexander MacKenzie, commonly called "The Emperor," (see page 64). The difference in date of the break up of the ice in the river at Dunvegan and at the "Rocky Mountain" indicates that the latter means Rocky Mountain Portage, not the Rocky Mountain Fort.

June 6. Old reports refer to an "Old Wives lake" on the road from Dunvegan to Smoky river Forks, and about 36 miles from Dunvegan. It has apparently now dried up.

June 15. Monte Décorce; The Birch hills, 25 miles southeast of Dunvegan.

July 5. Letter left by Archibald Norman McLeod at Vermilion, on his way out in May.

August 19. See Morice: Northern B.C., page 60.

September 18. Note the authoritative way in which the writer arranges matters, yet suppresses his own part.

October 11. Archibald Norman McLeod; back from the annual meeting at Fort William.

October 12. Apparently "the Emperor," namesake of the explorer. or Andrew MacKenzie mentioned by Harmon, page 143.

INDEX

- Anderson, James, 91.
Aspin fort, 26.
- Bark river, 46, 57.
Beaver Indians, 14, 19, 82.
Birch river, 46, 57.
Birch hills, 132.
Bird, James, 100.
Black, Samuel, 96, 110, 113, 116, 121.
Blanchet, G.H., 119.
Boucher, J.B., see La Malice.
Boyer, 18, 22, 23, 65.
Boyer river, 53.
Brousseau, 43, 52.
- Calgary, 73, 119.
Cameron, Agnes Deans, 108.
Campbell, Colin, 81, 86, 115.
Campbell, Duncan, 90, 101.
Carrier's lake, 76, 132.
Chipewyan, fort, 22, 24, 50, 119.
Chiswick house, 65.
Claire, lake, 13, 46, 57.
Clarke, John, 62, 91 to 110.
Clarke, old fort, 91.
Coal island, 93.
- Daoust's post, 53.
Du Tremble, fort, 26.
Dunvegan, fort, 71, 72, to 78.
Dunvegan journal, 122 to 134.
- Encampment island fort, 77, 80.
English Chief, 46.
English island, 65.
Epinette river and fort, 77.
- Fer-a-Cheval, see Horse Shoe.
Fidler, Peter, 58, 65, 89.
- Finlay exploration, 35, 38, 41.
Finlay, James, senior, 39.
Finlay, James, junior, 39, 41.
Finlay, John, 26, 28, 34, 39, 46, 48, 50.
Fish river, 22, 24.
Fork fort, 29, 31, 106.
Fountain island, 60.
Franklin, captain, 64, 111.
Franklin, fort, 64.
Fraser, Alexander, 35, 67, 69.
Fraser, Simon, 35, 38, 48, 49, 59, 84, 98, 132.
Frobisher, Joseph, 11.
- Goedike, Fred., 72, 82, 127.
Grand isle, 25.
Grand Marais, 42, 52, 63.
Grand Portage, 16, 17, 21.
Grant, Cuthbert, 12, 20, 22.
Great Slave lake, 12, 20, 99.
Gregory, John, 24, 39.
Gregory, McLeod and Co., 26, 29.
- Hache, lac la, 89.
Harmon, D.W., 79 to 85, 115.
Hemlock poison, 126.
Henry, Alexander, junior, 88.
Henry, Alexander, senior, 11.
Henry, Robert, 88, 120.
Holmes, David, 123, 130, 133.
Horse Shoe House, 61, 77, 96.
Howay, F.W., 106, 108, 118.
Hudson Hope, 35.
- Ile a la Crosse, 11, 17, 89, 92.
- Johnston, J.H., 106, 108.
- Keith, George, 100, 112, 115.

- Lafleur, Baptiste, 48, 55, 126.
 Lafleur's fort, 48, 55.
 La Malice (J. B. Boucher), 70,
 76, 132, 133.
 Leroux, Laurent, 12.
 Lesser Slave lake, 19, 82, 98.
 Leith, James, 64, 115.
 Liard, fort, 63, 81.

 McAulay, Aulay, 93, 99.
 MacDougall, George, 93, 97, 98.
 MacDougall, James, 38, 70, 84.
 McGillis, Hugh, 90.
 MacGillivray, Archibald, 95, 97,
 123, 124, 134.
 MacGillivray, John, 83, 86, 87, 94.
 MacGillivray, Simon, 113, 115.
 MacGillivray, William, 45, 67, 113.
 McKenvin, Mr., 127, 128, 135.
 Mackenzie, sir Alexander, see
 table of Contents.
 MacKenzie, Alexander, 'Emperor
 64.
 MacKenzie, Daniel, 78.
 MacKenzie, James, 47, 59, 75.
 MacKenzie, Kenneth, 40, 64.
 Mackenzie, Roderick (Terre-
 bonne), 14, 22, 24, 34, 42.
 MacKenzie, Roderick, "senior,"
 93, 99.
 MacKenzie, Roderick, "captain,"
 99.
 McLellan, Archibald, 99.
 McLeod, Alexander, 18, 22, 28, 30,
 35, 42, 46, 50.
 McLeod, Alexander Roderick,
 77, 95, 115, 122.
 McLeod, Archibald Norman, 31,
 58, 72, 75, 78, 100, 124, 133.
 McLeod, Norman, 29, 31.
 McLeor, fort (McLeod lake)
 70.
 McLeod, fort, (Whitemud r.), 27,
 30, 60.
 McLeod, fort, (Smoky r.), 47, 76.
 McMurray, Thomas, 101, 115.
 McNeill, Hector, 102.
 McTavish, John George, 81, 110,
 115.
 McTavish, Simon, 24, 113.
 Mair, Charles, 108.
 Mansfield House, 65.

 Mikkwa river, 43, 63.
 Malitaire, 105, 126.
 Miles, Robert, 99.
 Montagner Indians, 53.
 Montreal partners, 16.

 New Caledonia, 66, 85.
 New Establishment, 26, 53, 54.
 Nolin, Clerk, 93, 97.
 Nottingham House, 65.

 Old Establishment, 25.

 Peace Point, 15.
 Peace River, see table of Con-
 tents.
 Pierre au Caumet, 93, 102.
 Pine river, 35, 77.
 Pond, Peter, 11, 12, 15, 20.
 Potato island, 93.
 Porter, James, 56, 57.

 Red river, Little, 44, 45.
 Reindeer lake, 68.
 Robertson, Colin, 90, 104, 111.
 Rocheblave, Pierre de, 64.
 Rocky Mountain fort, 35, 36, 52,
 71, 76.
 Rocky Mountain Portage, 70, 85,
 124.
 Ross, John, 18, 26.

 St. Germain, 18.
 St. James, fort, 76, 132.
 St. John, fort, 70, 77, 82, 112.
 St. Mary's House, 106, 109, 111.
 Selkirk, Earl, 87, 90, 122.
 Simpson, Governor, 32, 112, 113.
 Sinew river, 33, 35.
 Slave river, 15, 56.
 Smith, Edward, 98.
 Stiles' map, 12.
 Stuart, John, 38, 46, 48, 51, 84,
 102, 111, 115, 124.

 Thompson, David, 27, 36, 44, 60,
 62, 89.
 Thomson, John, 42, 45, 50, 52, 59,
 115.
 Tomison, 89.

Trembles, fort des, 26.
Turnor, Philip, 13, 24, 28, 64.

Vaudrieul, 22, 23, 25.
Vermilion, fort (modern), 25, 59.
Vermilion, fort, upper, 62, 81.
Vermilion river, 13, 19, 44.
Vieuxards, riviere aux, 52, 53.

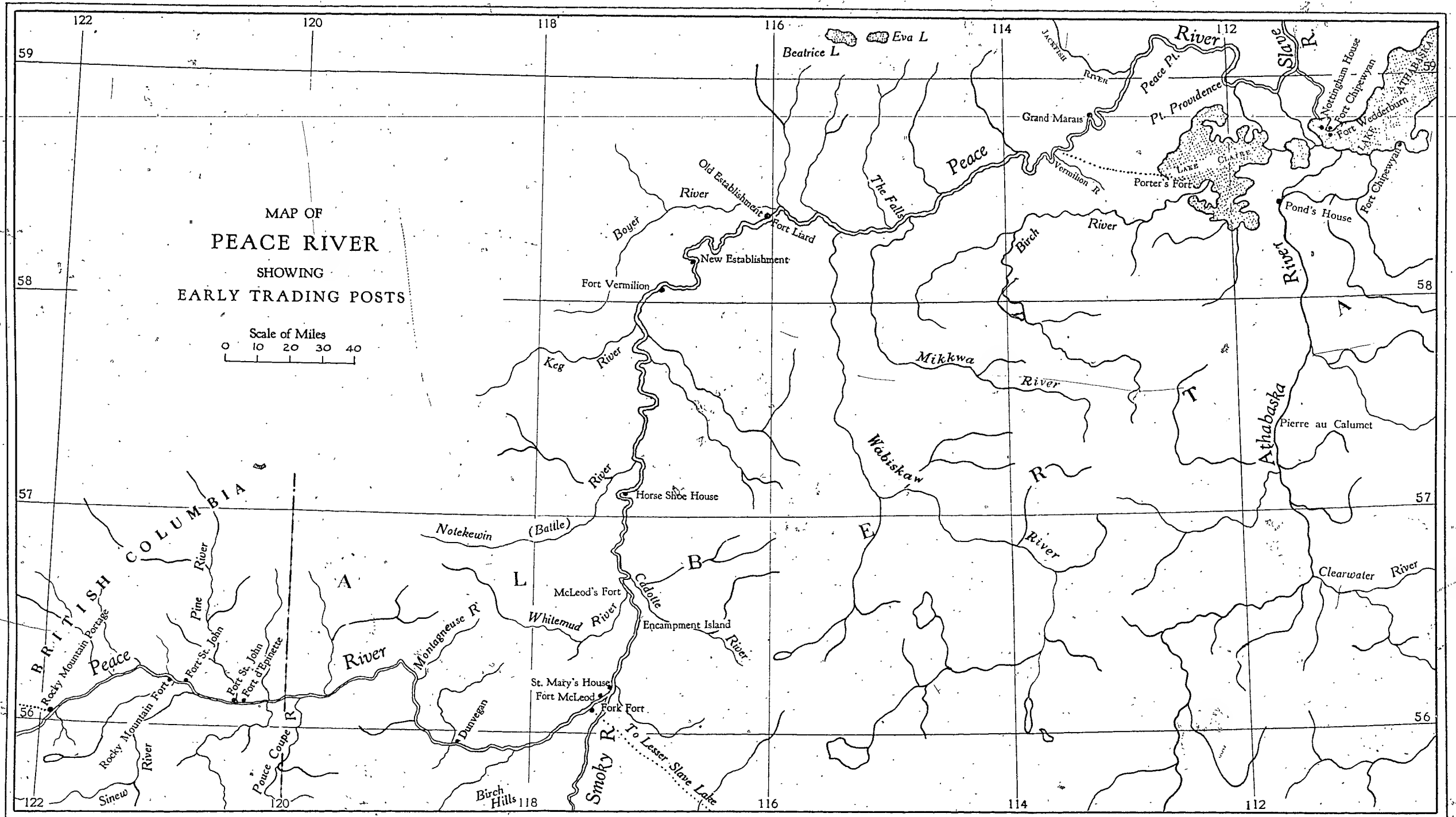
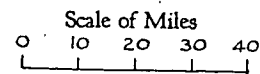
Wedderburn, fort, 93, 98.
Wentzel, W. F., 51, 63.
Whitemud river, 27, 29.
Wintering partners, 16.
Wollaston lake, 89.
Wolverine point, 61.

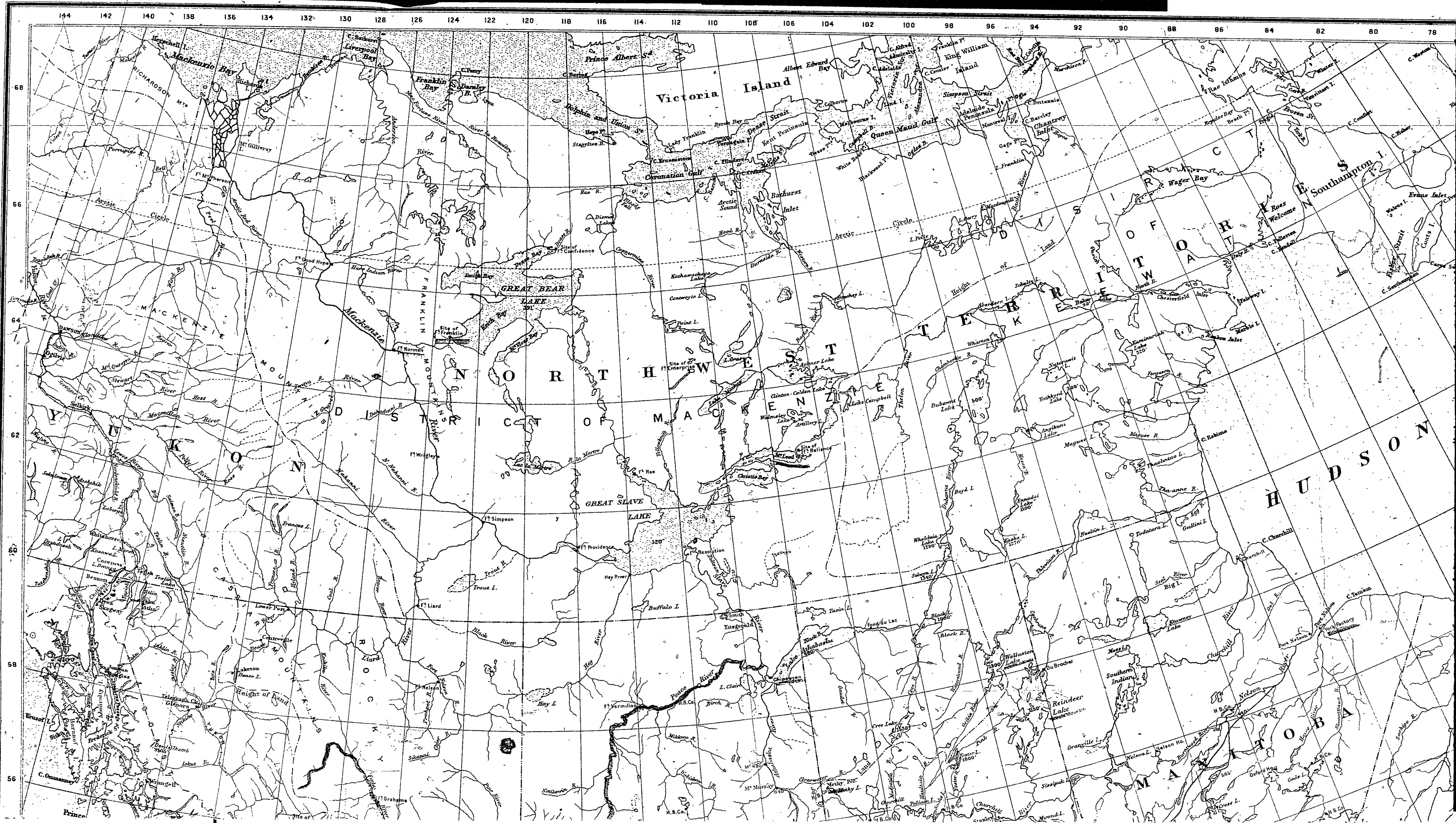
X. Y. Company, 51, 54, 58, 64, 66.
107.

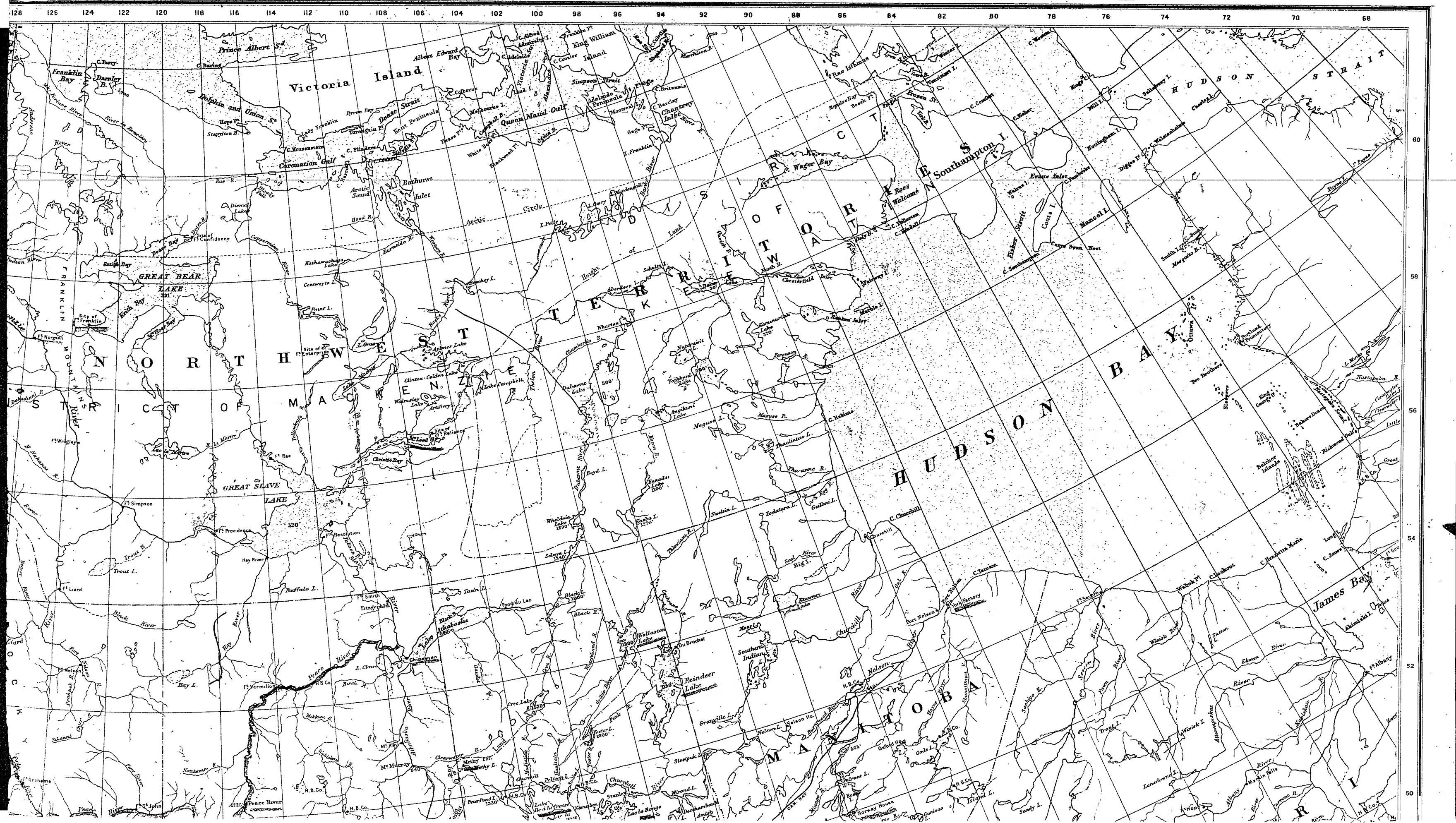
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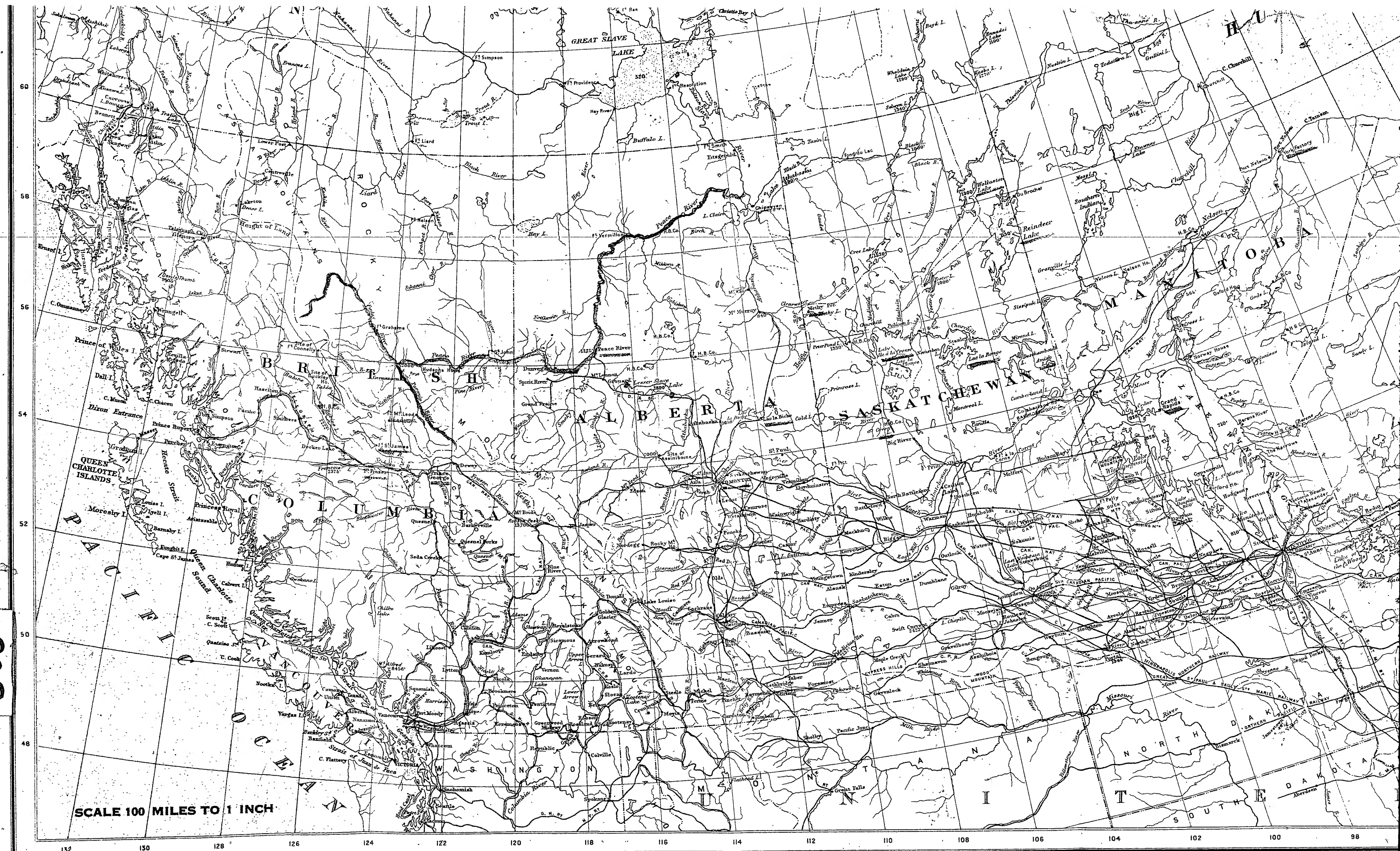
Yale, James M., 93, 95, 112.

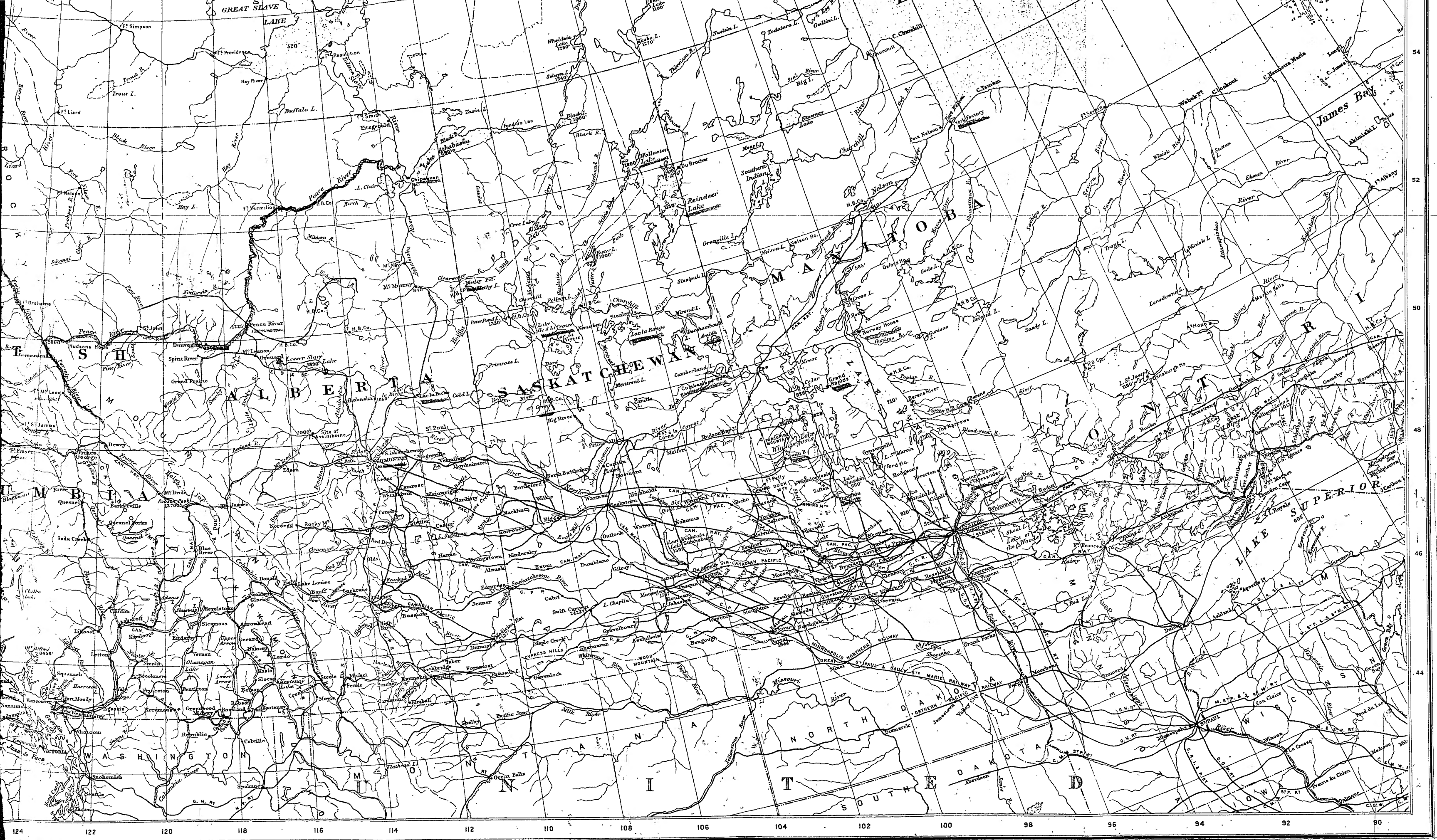
MAP OF
PEACE RIVER
SHOWING
EARLY TRADING POSTS











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